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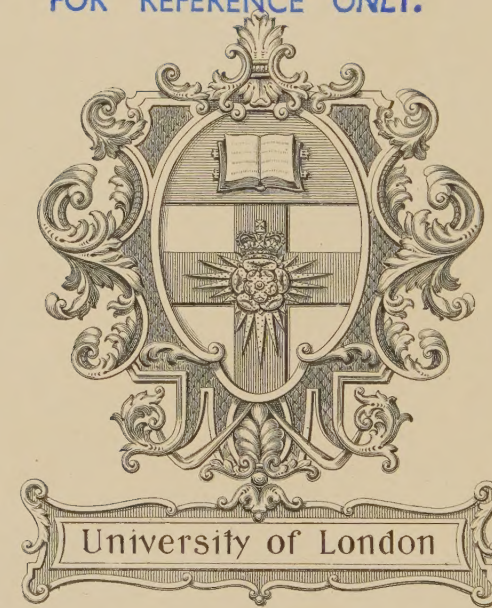

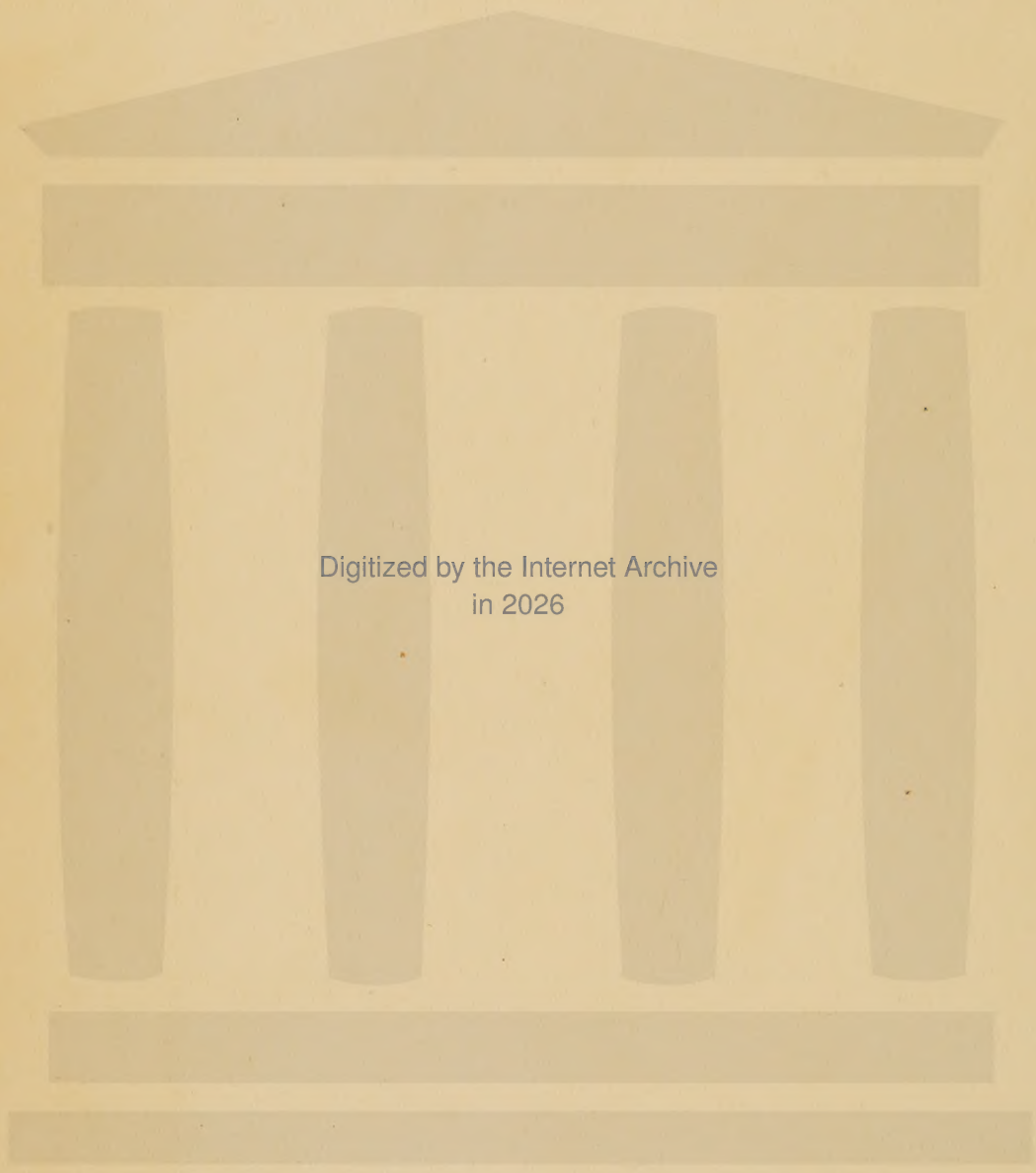

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HANDLOOM WEAVERS.

RETURN to an ADDRESS of the Honourable The House of Commons, dated 18 June 1839;—*for*,

A RETURN of the Number of CONVICTIONS for the Embezzlement of YARNS by HANDLOOM WEAVERS and Others, in the Town of *Forfar*, in the Years 1837 and 1838.

SHERIFF COURT.

RETURN of the Number of CONVICTIONS for the Embezzlement of Yarns by Handloom Weavers and Others, in the Town of *Forfar*, in the Years 1837 and 1838.

DATE.	NAME.	CRIME.	SENTENCE.
1837 - -	None - - - - -	——	——
1838, Feb. 27	Susan Cooper, or Stewart	Theft of yarns - -	- - Two months' imprisonment.
— May 24	Elizabeth Peter, or Doig -	Reset of stolen yarns -	- - Two months' imprisonment.

David Gow,
Sheriff-Clerk Depute of Forfarshire.

Forfar, 24 June 1839.

HANDLOOM WEAVERS.

RETURN of the Number of Convictions for Embezzlement of Yarns by Handloom Weavers in *Forfar*, in the Years 1837 and 1838.

(Mr. Chalmers.)

Ordered, by The House of Commons, *to be Printed,*
17 *July* 1839.

HAND-LOOM WEAVERS.

RETURN to an Address of the Honourable The House of Commons, dated 6 March 1838;—*for*,

A COPY of INSTRUCTIONS that have been issued to Assistant Commissioners of Inquiry into Hand-Loom Weavers.

Instructions from the Central Board of the Hand-loom Weavers' Inquiry Commission to their Assistant Commissioners.

Her Majesty's Commission, issued in compliance with an Address of the House of Commons, and following the words of that Address, directs the Central Commissioners to inquire into the condition of the unemployed hand-loom weavers in the United Kingdom, and to report whether any, and, if so, what, measures may be devised for their relief. The first inquiries instituted by the Commissioners lead them to the belief that there are few unemployed hand-loom weavers, and consequently that if the terms of the Commission were strictly followed, the inquiry would be short and unproductive. There appear, however, to be grounds for thinking that, although the hand-loom weavers are generally employed, many classes of them were, at the time when the Address was presented to Her Majesty, and are now, in a state of great privation and distress, arising immediately not from want of employment, but from insufficient wages and excessive toil. Under such circumstances, the Commissioners believing it to be Her Majesty's intention that the sufferings of this large and meritorious portion of Her subjects, whatever be their proximate cause, should be investigated, and remedies, if any be practicable, be suggested, have requested and obtained permission to consider the word "unemployed" as a qualification not intended to confine their inquiries. The Commission is therefore to be acted upon as if it did not contain that word.

In considering the mode in which the wide inquiry now opened to the Commissioners can be best conducted, the first remark that occurs is, that under the term hand-loom weavers are included many different classes of artificers following their respective occupations under dissimilar circumstances; and that the situation of each class is therefore likely to be different; to be affected by different causes; and to be susceptible of improvement by different means.

It is probable that the principal distinction between the separate trades in all of which the hand-loom is used, arises from the material on which the weaver works, and that hand-loom weavers may therefore be first divided into four classes:

Those employed—

1. On cotton
2. On woollen.
3. On flax.
4. On silk.

And that these four great classes may also, for the purpose of this inquiry, be further subdivided. Those who make carpets, or blankets, or fine cloths, are all hand-loom weavers employed on woollen: those who make damask hangings, and those who make ribbons, are both hand-loom weavers employed on silk; but it is probable that there is much dissimilarity of condition among those who are engaged in processes so dissimilar. The first duty of those who have to prosecute the details of the inquiry is to ascertain the number of separate trades into which hand-loom weaving is divided, and the principal distinctions which characterize each trade.

The inquiry respecting each class of weavers will then naturally fall under three heads—

1. Their actual condition.
2. The causes of that condition.
3. The means, if any, by which it can be improved.

The last is, of course, the practical object of the Commission: it is the point to which all the other inquiries tend; but though it must be constantly borne in mind, yet as it is the last point for actual consideration, it will be most natural to advert to it last in these Instructions.

On the first head, the actual condition of the hand-loom weavers, much information has already been laid before Parliament. Unless the Assistant Commissioner is already master of that evidence, as printed in the Parliamentary Reports of 1834 and 1835, it will be his duty to become so before he begins his inquiry. The Address, however, which led to the issuing of the present Commission, shows the opinion of the House of Commons that the existing evidence is incomplete or unsatisfactory.

To supply that deficiency through his own personal investigation, is the first business of the Assistant Commissioner.

For this purpose, having ascertained the number of separate trades into which hand-loom weaving, as practised within the district assigned to him, is divided, and the principal distinctions by which they are separated, he will endeavour to ascertain, with respect to each separate trade, the number of families of hand-loom weavers employed in it, considering each person who manages his own concerns as constituting a family, and the number of persons in each family. He will also endeavour to ascertain what variations have occurred at different periods in the number of persons employed in each separate trade, and the circumstances under which each increase or diminution of such numbers has occurred.

He will then inquire—

I. With respect to the pecuniary condition of the weavers.

1st. What proportion in each trade are exclusively employed in hand-loom weaving, and what proportion engaged in it themselves, or through any members of their family, only in the intervals of other and what pursuits.

2d. The amount of money which can be earned per hour in each department of each trade, by men, women, and children respectively, distinguishing the earnings of each according to age and sex, and distinguishing between skilled and unskilled persons; and stating particularly what period of previous practice is necessary to enable a given person to earn a given sum per hour; and also stating the number of looms possessed or used by the same family, and the collective earnings of such family.

3d. The deduction to be made from these earnings for expenses incident to their acquisition, such as winding, candles, standing for loom, and the wear and tear of the loom, and other apparatus, and interest on its value. With respect to the last point, it will be necessary to ascertain whether the loom belongs to the weaver, or is hired by him, or belongs to his master, whether himself a hand-loom weaver, or the master of a factory. The rate per week at which a loom and the other tools of a weaver can be hired, will afford some ground for estimating the sum which ought to be deducted from wages for the mere services of the weaver, and considered as profit on his capital.

4th. With respect to those who, either by themselves or by any members of their family, are engaged in any other pursuits, the amount of wages per hour, or per day, obtained by them respectively in those other pursuits.

5th. The constancy of employment in each trade. That is to say, for what number of hours per week each individual can obtain work.

With respect to the 2d, 4th and 5th of these inquiries, it is obvious that average results only can be obtained; and it must be recollected, that by the actual condition of the weavers is meant, not their actual condition on the day on which the inquiry is made, but for such a previous period as may indicate the condition in which they may expect to continue. The inquiry, therefore, even for this purpose alone, must be spread over a period of at least two years, that period being the shortest that will afford average results.

The results of these inquiries will show what amount of net wages the hand-loom weavers, in their several departments, are able to earn. But in order to ascertain what wages they actually do earn, the Assistant Commissioner must endeavour to learn to what extent they use the opportunities afforded to them.

For this purpose he will inquire—

6th. How many hours per day, and how many days per week, the persons employed as hand-loom weavers in each trade usually work, when employment is to be had, distinguishing them according to age and sex. Some evidence on this head may be obtained by ascertaining from the masters who put out work, within what period they reckon on its being finished; that is to say, within what period they reckon on being able to complete a given order requiring the labour of a given number of men, women, and children, for a given number of hours.

7th. He will inquire to what extent the weavers in each trade are in the habit of receiving apprentices or journeymen, and the average proportion of the earnings of the apprentice or journeyman received by the hand-loom weaver who is his master, or the owner or hirer of the loom on which he works.

8th. He will inquire to what extent either parochial assistance, or aid from individuals, or from subscriptions, has been afforded to them, and in those towns in which electioneering abuses prevail, to what extent the weavers have profited by them.

The answers to these inquiries will show what is the actual pecuniary condition of the weavers, since they will show their average net incomes per head and per family during the last two years.

But the pecuniary state of the weavers is not the only or indeed the principal subject of inquiry. Their moral condition is far more material, both to themselves, and to the rest of the community; and it is placed in this paper subsequently to the pecuniary inquiry, not because the Commissioners undervalue its relative importance, but partly because it is less susceptible of accurate statement, and partly because it is in a great measure dependent on the former. It is true, indeed, that the two are mutually dependent; but among bodies of artizans inhabiting the same district, and surrounded by the same degree of civilization, and the same means of instruction, it is, perhaps, more probable, that pecuniary distress, or, what is more mischievous, great and sudden alternations of prosperity and adversity, will produce a low moral condition, than that a low moral condition will occasion pecuniary distress.

II. With reference, therefore, to the moral condition of the hand-loom weavers, the Assistant Commissioner will investigate the religious, intellectual, and moral cultivation of the adults in their respective trades.

For this purpose he will inquire—

1st. To what extent they appear to possess elementary Scriptural information, and to frequent places of worship.

2d. The extent of their knowledge, with particular, but not exclusive, reference to their own trade; how far they understand the principles of the machinery and implements which they employ, and the means of improving them; whether they are acquainted with the number and comparative accessibleness of the markets for their labour, or generally with the means of bettering their condition; whether they subscribe to book societies, or frequent mechanics' institutes, or show any and what desire of intellectual pleasure or improvement.

3d. Their habits, with reference to diligence, providence, frugality, honesty, and temperance. To their diligence, attention has already been directed. As to their providence and frugality, the Assistant Commissioner will inquire into the modes of their expenditure, whether economical or wasteful, and whether for purposes of immediate or permanent enjoyment; to what extent they save when their earnings exceed the average, and how their savings are invested; whether they subscribe to benefit or friendly clubs, or savings' banks, or to other institutions of a similar nature; what is the average age of marriage in each sex, and the capital, or stock, if any, previously accumulated, and whether in money, clothes, furniture, or in what other form. As to their honesty, he will inquire into the degree in which embezzlement of their masters' property, which has been attributed particularly to the silk-weavers, prevails; and, generally, what are the frauds to which they are peculiarly tempted in their respective trades, and how far those temptations are yielded to. And with respect to their temperance, he will inquire to what extent they use stimulants, and of what kinds, and what is the effect on their bodies and minds.

With respect to the children of the hand-loom weavers in their respective trades, the Assistant Commissioner will inquire to what extent they frequent places of worship and Sunday-schools; to what extent, and for how many hours per week, and at what ages, they attend week-day schools, distinguishing infant-schools from others, and noticing particularly such industrial schools as may tend to fit them for any other and what employments; the expense of such attendance, either in loss of the child's time or in money, and if in money, by whom paid; the salaries, earnings, and capacities of the masters; the nature and extent of the knowledge there acquired, and the degree in which the attendance of the children is interrupted, either by their own employment, or by the poverty, or neglect, or selfish indulgence of their parents. And he will endeavour to ascertain, by personal examination of children of different ages, and in different trades of hand-loom weavers, the degree of their religious, intellectual, and moral cultivation. Among

the most decisive tests of the religious, intellectual, and moral condition of the adults, are the nature of the education which they actually give to their children, the degree in which they appear to be anxious that their children shall obtain a better education, and what sort of improved education they desire for them, and what are the sacrifices which they really make, or appear willing to make, for the improvement of their children.

It is believed that the principal points of inquiry respecting the condition of the weavers have now been indicated. For the purpose of ascertaining, however, how far the hand-loom weavers, or any portion of them, have a claim to any interference in their behalf, extending beyond the general and impartial superintendence which the Legislature ought to extend to every class of Her Majesty's subjects, it will be necessary that the Assistant Commissioner should compare the condition of the hand-loom weavers, in each trade, with that of other classes of hand-loom weavers, and also with that of the labouring classes in general. Considering, however, the nature and extent of the investigation specially directed by the Commission, and the time which the Assistant Commissioner will be able to devote to it, it is obvious that all collateral inquiries must be comparatively restricted. As far, however, as it may be practicable, he will institute such a comparison.

II.—The second branch of the inquiry incumbent on the Commission respects the causes of the condition of the hand-loom weavers. In the preceding instructions it has not been assumed that their condition differs materially from that of the labouring classes by whom they are surrounded. If it should turn out that there are no grounds for assuming that there is such a difference; if it should turn out that in their respective trades they are on the whole as well off as their fellow work-people, no further inquiry will be necessary. The labouring classes in Great Britain, though far from being in the condition which is to be wished, or even in that to which the continuance of tranquillity, the extension of education, and greater commercial freedom, may be expected to advance them, are yet more prosperous than the corresponding classes in any other considerable population in Europe; and although Ireland offers a lamentable contrast, yet if the hand-loom weavers in that country are subject to no peculiar suffering, the Commissioners would scarcely be justified in seeking for and suggesting measures for their peculiar and exclusive benefit. Under such circumstances, it would not be necessary for the Assistant Commissioner to investigate the causes of a condition not different from that of the bulk of the population, and the Commissioners having no special recommendations to offer, would fulfil their duty by reporting the condition of the hand-loom weavers to be similar to that of the other labouring classes in the country, and therefore, not to require any peculiar legislative interference.

But unhappily there are grounds for anticipating, from the investigation that has been directed, a different result. The evidence that was received by the Committee of the House of Commons in 1834 and 1835 shows that in those years there prevailed among many branches of hand-loom weavers, and in many parts of the kingdom, severe distress and a low moral condition; and the information which has been received by the Commissioners, during the short time that they have been assembled, does not encourage them to hope that the condition of the hand-loom weavers has undergone any essential change since that time.

If this anticipation should prove correct, and the Assistant Commissioner should find any class of hand-loom weavers to be in a condition less favourable than that of the labouring classes in general, his earnest attention must be directed to the causes of their condition.

For this purpose he will inquire—

1st. As to the condition of the peculiar branch of the hand-loom trade in question, either during the last fifty years, or, if the manufacture is of later origin, from its commencement.

The Committee of the House of Commons in 1835 reported, that "the general fall of wages, and consequent distress, of the hand-loom weavers, has been rapidly progressive ever since the termination of the late war." Some of the witnesses examined before that Committee state the distress to have lasted much longer. Mr. Marshall, for instance (p. 28, question 193), states that they have been getting uniformly worse in condition since the year 1793. The accuracy of these statements is one of the most material points in the investigation.

At whatever period he finds distress to have been prevalent among the weavers employed in that trade, he will compare their condition at such periods with that of other classes of hand-loom weavers, and also with that of other mechanics; and, finally, with that of the agricultural labourers.

2d. If he finds its distress peculiar, he will endeavour to ascertain to what peculiar influences it has been subjected. These may arise from causes either unconnected with the conduct of the work-people (A), or depending on that conduct (B).

A.

Under the first head (A) are comprised—

A 1. First, the diminution of the demand for their labour, arising from a diminished demand for the articles on which it is employed, as in the case of the substitution of woollens for silks, or from a different mode of manufacturing the same articles, as in the case of the substitution of the power-loom for the hand-loom, or of Foreign for British weavers, occasioned either by the importation of foreign goods, or by the promotion of foreign manufactures by the export of yarn, or by restrictions imposed by Foreign States on the import of British manufactures.

A 2. Secondly, legislative enactments, affecting only a peculiar trade, such as the Spitalfields Weavers' Act; or affecting peculiar manufactures, such as the duty on raw cotton, or that on thrown silk.

A 3. Thirdly, according to much of the evidence taken by the Committee of the House of Commons in 1834 and 1835, the laws affecting the importation of corn.

A 4. Fourthly, according to the opinion of that Committee, the resumption of cash payments and the general pressure of taxation.

A 5. Fifthly, according to much of the evidence taken by that Committee, a reduction of wages by the master manufacturers uncalled for by the circumstances of the trade.

A 6. And, sixthly, according to portions of that evidence, frauds practised by the masters respecting the measurement of their work.

B.

Under the second head, the causes of peculiar distress, arising from the conduct of the work-people themselves, are comprised—

B 1. First, according to portions of the evidence, combinations, and strikes.

B 2. Secondly, according to other portions of the evidence, the want of combinations, and strikes.

B 3. Thirdly, the increase of their numbers, without a proportional increase in the demand for their labour, or even under a diminished demand for it.

B 4. And, fourthly, want of diligence, honesty, frugality, or temperance.

The Assistant Commissioner will inquire into the existence of these different causes of peculiar distress, and what effects, if any, on the trade in question they respectively have produced.

In some cases, if the existence of the supposed cause be admitted, the supposed effects appear necessarily to follow. Thus, if it be true, according to the statements of many of the witnesses examined by the Committee of the House of Commons, that the wages of the weavers depend on the will of the master-manufacturers, and that the master-manufacturers are forced all to follow the example of those among them who offer the lowest wages, it must follow that the wages of weavers can never long exceed the minimum of subsistence; for the instant they exceed that point, it certainly would be to the interest, and is supposed to be in the power, of some masters, to lower wages in order to undersell their rivals, and it is supposed that all the rest must follow their example. On this point, therefore, the Assistant Commissioner will endeavour to ascertain whether there are, in the different trades to which the hand-loom is applicable, any and what peculiarities which give to the employer of hand-loom weavers a power, not possessed by the employers of labourers in other trades, of fixing the wages of those whose labour is essential to him, or which enable the master who reduces wages to force others to follow his example.

In other cases, the supposed cause may be an acknowledged fact, and the only doubt may be, how far the distress of any branch of hand-loom weavers is connected with it. In order to ascertain, for instance, whether that distress can be traced to the

admitted facts of the resumption of cash-payments, or the pressure of general taxation, the Assistant Commissioner must ascertain whether there are any special circumstances attending any branch of hand-loom weavers, rendering them peculiarly liable to be affected by causes which have not prevented the general prosperity of the manufacturing population.

In other cases, both the existence and the consequences of the supposed cause of distress may admit of comparatively easy proof; and the business of the Assistant Commissioner will be to ascertain the circumstances which led to its existence. The fact, for instance, that the number of persons engaged in any given branch of weaving has increased beyond the demand for their labour, may in general be easily ascertained whenever it has occurred; and no one can doubt that distress, severe in proportion to the undue supply of labour, must have been the result.

In such a case, it will be the duty of the Assistant Commissioner to endeavour to trace the origin of that increase, and to ascertain whether it may have arisen from the slight degree of skill or of strength required by the business in question, or from its freedom from the control and regular hours of a factory, or from the stimulus of occasional periods of extraordinary prosperity, or from the ignorance of an uneducated body of work-people, accustomed to early marriage, and to training their children to their own business, or from abuses in the administration of parochial relief, or from individual charity or public subscriptions, excessive or ill directed, or from any other and what causes.

With respect to the whole of this branch of the inquiry, the Commissioners repeat their conviction of the necessity of comparing the condition of each class of hand-loom weavers that appears to be at present, or to have been at any former period, distressed, with that of the other classes of hand-loom weavers, and also with that of other labourers at corresponding periods. If, for instance, distress is attributed to any class of cotton-weavers, and the power-loom is the cause assigned, the Assistant Commissioner will carefully inquire into the state at the same period of other classes of hand-loom weavers free from the interference of the power-loom. If they appear to have been then equally distressed, a suspicion will arise that the common distress was occasioned by a common cause. But if the distress of the cotton-weavers appears to have been peculiar, and to have arisen and to have spread simultaneously with the introduction and the extension of the power-loom, a *primâ facie* probability of their connexion will of course be established. Again, if a sudden diminution of the demand for the labour of the hand-loom cotton-weavers, occasioned by the state of the foreign market, is assigned as a cause of occasional distress, and it should appear that the power-loom weavers, though working for the same market, were less affected, the causes of this difference must be carefully investigated; and if it should be found that the two trades differ principally in the large amount of fixed capital invested in the one, and the small amount in the other, the greater steadiness of wages or of employment in the one than in the other may perhaps be accounted for. It is probable, also, that valuable results may be obtained by subdividing the weavers in a single trade, according to distinctions not connected with the trade itself, and by comparing with one another the sub-classes thus formed; by comparing, for instance, the condition of Irish, Scotch, and English hand-loom weavers, all engaged in the same business, at the same time and place. If, on such a comparison, marked differences of condition should appear, causes unconnected with the trade itself must be searched for.

III.—The last and most important of the duties imposed by the Commission is the inquiry whether there are any, and what, remedies for the existing distress. The remedies actually proposed by the Committee of the House of Commons appear to be these:—

1st. The enactment of the law proposed by Mr. Fielden, "That returns shall be made every three or six months of the prices of weaving paid by the smallest number of manufacturers, who collectively make one-half of the goods of any description, in the parish or township whence the returns are sent, and the average of the highest prices paid by a majority of such manufacturers shall be the lowest price to be paid in such parish or township during the succeeding three or six months."

2d. A more exact specification of the length and breadth of the pieces of goods to be manufactured.

3d. A

3d. A cheaper legal form of indenture of apprentices, and a reduction of the stamp-duty to 5*s*.

4th. A more summary and effectual protection against embezzlement of weaving materials.

Considering the authority by which these suggestions are recommended, the Assistant Commissioner will carefully attend to them; and, with reference to them, he will consider—

1st. How far a more exact specification of the length and breadth of the pieces of goods to be manufactured would tend to prevent fraud on the part of the masters, and how far it can be adopted without vesting in third persons the right of interfering with and controlling the manufacturer in the management of his own business.

2d. How far a cheaper legal form of indenture of apprentices, and a reduction of the stamp-duty to 5*s*., would tend to increase the number of persons brought up to hand-loom weaving, and whether such an increase be desirable.

3d. By what means a more summary and effectual protection against embezzlement of weaving materials can be provided, without diminishing the safety of persons innocently accused, or imposing a vexatious system of checks: and

4th. What would be the probable effects of a law which should attempt to provide that the money paid for weaving by the hand-loom each description of article should be incapable of diminution.

It is obvious, however, that with respect to these inquiries he will be able to do little until he has made some progress in ascertaining, with respect to each branch of hand-loom weaving, the nature, the extent, and the causes of the existing distress. So far as that distress arises from a diminished demand for the labour of the weaver, it must be aggravated by a law which would make his labour more expensive, without being more productive. So far as it may arise from want of diligence or skill, it is not likely to be diminished by a law endeavouring to equalize wages, and to apportion them to the quantity of work done, not to its quality.

But if the Assistant Commissioner should be able to trace the distress in any trade to a power, possessed and exercised by the masters, of lowering at their will the workman's remuneration, the proposed remedy will, at least, be plausible.

The same general remarks apply to the other recommendations made by the witnesses examined by the Committee of the House of Commons, or which have been already forwarded to the Central Board, for their own use and that of the Assistant Commissioner, or which may be expected to be suggested to the Assistant Commissioner. He will carefully consider them all, but it is not likely that he will be able to decide either for or against any of them, until his inquiry into the condition of the weavers for whose distress the remedy is proposed, and into the causes of that condition, has been nearly concluded.

The Commissioners however believe that a careful attendance to the following rules will, in every case, facilitate his decision.

1st. To require every person who proposes a remedy to explain in detail both the object to be effected, the means to be used, and the process by which the proposed means are to produce the contemplated effect. Those means should be stated with the fulness and precision of a law; so that, if the suggestion were adopted, the law for effecting it would be ready. In many cases remedies have been suggested in words so vague as to include many different proposals. The extension of education among weavers' children has been frequently proposed; it is a remedy to which the Assistant Commissioner must give his earnest attention; but those who have proposed it have not stated whether the education is to be voluntary or compulsory; if voluntary, to what extent it is likely to be accepted; if compulsory, whether to be enforced by requiring attendance in schools, or by a test of proficiency; if by requiring attendance in schools, at whose expense the schools should be established, and by whom the masters selected; and whether the parent or the employer should be punished for the child's non-attendance; if by a test of proficiency, what that test should be, and how enforced.

2d. To inquire into the probable effects of any proposed remedy, not only on the branch of trade for whose relief it may be proposed, but also on the community in general; stating specially what class of persons, and how, and to what extent, would be peculiarly benefited or injured by it. And where the proposed measure, if adopted, would extensively affect the whole community, in the case, for instance, of a repeal or alteration of the corn-laws, or a debasement of the currency, the Assistant

Commissioner will require the persons recommending such a measure to point out with precision the process by which it will relieve the distress peculiarly affecting any branch of hand-loom weavers, and restore them, as respects wages and condition, to the general level of the labouring classes of the country. His inquiries upon such subjects must be confined within these limits.

3d. To distinguish, in all cases, between the immediate and the remote effects of any proposed measure.

It is possible that immediate relief might be obtained from remedies which in time would cease to be efficient, or would even aggravate the evil now complained of; or which, though immediately innocuous to the rest of the community, would in time become mischievous; and it is possible that measures may be proposed trifling in their good effects or even onerous at their commencement, but ultimately and permanently efficacious.

The Commissioners have now given a brief outline of the services which they expect from their Assistant Commissioner. Their object has been not to state the details, but to indicate the principal heads of inquiry. They believe, however, that they have said enough to enable every one who ventures to undertake the office to understand the nature of his duties and the extent of his responsibility. He will enter on an inquiry vast in its extent and multifarious and dissimilar in its branches. He will have to ascertain the moral, intellectual, and physical condition of a numerous and widely-scattered population, differing in religion, in habits, and in circumstances, and connected only by the use of the hand-loom. He will have to ascertain that condition not only at present but during many previous years, and to compare it at corresponding periods with that of all the other labouring classes in the community. All the facts which he establishes he will have to trace to their causes, both immediate and remote. And, lastly, he will state, with the completeness of their practical details, the measures, if any, of which he can recommend the adoption. He will have to sift the evidence of witnesses, of whom the majority may be hoped to be honest and intelligent, but many must draw their notions from a narrow experience, and some undoubtedly will endeavour to mislead him. He will have to combat many favourite theories, and may disappoint many vague or extravagant but long-cherished expectations. It is scarcely necessary to state that the most patient attention must be shown in his intercourse with those who are the subjects of his inquiry. Their complaints must be attentively heard, their grievances must be carefully investigated, and every plan suggested for their relief must be examined, with the most anxious desire to secure to them every protection and encouragement which does not either militate against their own ultimate interests, or involve injustice towards other classes of the community.

Under these feelings, the Central Board are confident that their Assistant will uniformly act; and that in all his discussions with the distressed weavers themselves, he will bear in mind that patience cannot be carried to an excess.

He will hear their statements with attention; he will inquire into the grounds of them with care; he will receive every suggestion in a friendly spirit, while he will search into its nature and merits with the strictness which is due to truth. Where he meets with prejudice or ignorance, he will endeavour to remove them by patient and temperate discussion, always remembering that, if the evil itself cannot be removed, the next duty owed to the distressed class, and the greatest service to be rendered to them, is that of clearly explaining to them their errors, and teaching them to understand their true condition, and the circumstances on which it really depends.

It is by such means only, and not by compliance with prejudice, or a dishonest sanction of false propositions, that the duties imposed upon the Assistant Commissioner can be faithfully discharged, or the welfare of the classes whose interests are now placed as a trust under his care can be effectually promoted.

Nassau W. Senior.
Samuel Jones Loyd.
William Edward Hickson.
John Leslie.

HAND-LOOM WEAVERS.

RETURN to an Address of the Honourable The House of Commons, dated 15 February 1839;—*for*,

COPIES of certain REPORTS of the ASSISTANT HAND-LOOM WEAVERS' COMMISSIONERS.

REPORTS

FROM

Assistant Hand-Loom Weavers' Commissioners.

REPORTS, by J. C. SYMONS, Esq., on the South of *Scotland*, and on *France*, *Belgium*, *Switzerland* and Part of *Austria*.

REPORT, by J. D. HARDING, Esq., LL. D. on the East of *Scotland*.

(*Mr. Labouchere.*)

Ordered, by The House of Commons, *to be Printed*,
27 *March* 1839.

Hand-loom Inquiry Commission,
3, Trafalgar-square, Westminster,
March 19, 1839.

Sir,

IN pursuance of Lord John Russell's desire, signified to this Board by your Letter of the 20th ult., that they should give directions that copies of any Reports of the Assistant Hand-loom Inquiry Commissioners be prepared and transmitted to you, I am directed to forward to you the enclosed copies of the Reports of Mr. Symons and Dr. Harding. They contain the Scotch Inquiry, and a portion of the Foreign Inquiry.

The other Reports will be transmitted as they are received.

I have the honour to be,
Sir,
Your most obedient Servant,

Joseph Fletcher,
Secretary.

To the Honourable Fox Maule, M.P.
&c. &c.

REPORT from J. C. Symons, Esq., on—

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REPORTS FROM ASSISTANT COMMISSIONERS.

South of Scotland.

REPORT from Jelinger C. Symons, Esq. on *Scotland*, South of *Forth and Clyde*.

Gentlemen,

South of Scotland.

Report from *J. C. Symons*, Esq.

The inquiry which I have assisted in executing, you have well characterised as one "vast in its extent, and multifarious and dissimilar in its branches."

The Assistant Commissioners were instructed "to ascertain the moral, intellectual and physical condition of a numerous and widely scattered population, differing in religion, in habits, and in circumstances, and connected only by the use of the hand-loom; to ascertain that condition, not only at present, but during many previous years, and to compare it at corresponding periods with that of all the other labouring classes in the community."

All the facts established we were likewise instructed "to trace to their causes, immediate and remote." And, lastly, "to state, with the completeness of their practical details, the measures, if any, of which we can recommend the adoption."

As the mode of executing an inquiry thus ramified and important, was left wholly to the discretion of the Assistant Commissioners, it may be right to state the manner in which I collected the information I am about to report.

Mode of Inquiry.

I found on my arrival in my district that considerable interest was excited on the subject. Being desirous to render the investigation as satisfactory as possible to those specially concerned in it, and feeling confident that the truth had nothing to fear from publicity, I determined to hold open courts of inquiry in each of the larger towns or weaving villages.

The Provost or Chief Magistrate of the place usually presided, and (with a single exception) afforded the utmost facility and assistance to the investigation. At these courts, the evidence of manufacturers and weavers was received; the former summoned chiefly by myself, and the latter left principally, but not entirely, to the selection of their own body.

Such being the practice of other Commissioners in Scotland, I commenced by allowing the witnesses to be cross-questioned by parties present; but the danger of continual interruption, and not unfrequent altercations, being soon apparent, I abandoned that course; and, after the first day or two, allowed no question or interruption to be offered to the witnesses under examination. I allowed any other person, however, to be examined subsequently, who requested to be permitted to do so, when opportunity was of course afforded for correcting any omission or mis-statement by previous witnesses.

The witnesses were examined, seriatim, on each of the topics embraced in the inquiry, with minuteness proportioned to their apparent ability to afford information; and it is but justice to them to declare, that the perfect success of the system of examination pursued, was greatly promoted by the admirable spirit generally evinced by both parties in facilitating the inquiry, and by the high order of intelligence displayed by the majority of the weavers themselves.

Perhaps the most valuable information as to the actual condition of the weaving body was obtained by means of personal visits to their houses and workshops, a practice which I extensively adopted, for the most part paying these visits when my presence was wholly unexpected, and at all times of the day.

I investigated the condition of other labouring classes likewise by domiciliary visits, and the wages both of the weavers and others have been obtained chiefly by

South of Scotland.

Report from *J. C. Symons*, Esq.

schedules sent to be filled up from the books of the employers, and signed by them.

The evidence thus liberally afforded by the employers of the weavers as to the rate of their wages, is irrefragable, though the untoward reluctance of many of the tradesmen to afford similar information has obliged me to have recourse largely to the accurate researches of Dr. Cleland in 1820, and to the additional information he has kindly afforded me as to the probable changes which have since occurred.

Extent of Inquiry.

The whole of Scotland was originally allotted to my investigation, which I commenced on the 19th of March at Glasgow, and completed the districts south of the Forth and Clyde on the 28th of June, when I was recalled to London.

Public Courts of Inquiry were held at Glasgow, Paisley, Hamilton, Airdrie, Strathaven, Kilsyth, Kirkintulloch, Eaglesham, Pollockshaws, Lanark, Rutherglen, Bothwell, Kilbarchan, Dalry, Saltcoats, Irvine, Kilmarnock, Ayr, Maybole, Girvan, Dumfries, Annan, Gretna Green, Langholm, Hawick, Jedburgh, Galashiels and Edinburgh.

I visited, also, 68 villages and minor districts, in most of which a few weavers were assembled and examined.

Since closing the inquiry in the south of Scotland, I have visited three places on the north of the Forth with my successor, Dr. Harding, and have held courts of inquiry jointly with him at Dumfermline and Perth.

Having thus specified the locality over which my investigation has extended, the following are its chief results, which I shall offer in nearly the same order in which they are indicated in your excellent instructions.

Number of Looms.

The total number of hand-looms in my district, as nearly as they could be ascertained, is 51,060, distributed according to the following Table:—

TABLE of the Weaving Towns and Villages of *Scotland* to the South of the *Forth* and *Clyde*; together with the Number of Hand-Looms, the Material woven, and the Population in each Place.

Number.	Name of Place.	County.	Population.	Material.	LOOMS.			TOTAL LOOMS.	
					Factory.	Harness.	Plain.	1838.	1828.
	Glasgow - -	Lanarkshire.							
	Parliamentary bounds	- Idem -	202,426	C.W.S.	1,580	1,206	6,564	9,350	12,000
	Vicinity of Glasgow -	- Idem.							
	East Muir and Shettleston - -	- Idem -	- -	C.W.S.	- -	8	222	230	
	Springburn - -	- Idem -	- -	C.W.	- -	200	90	290	
	Tollcross - -	- Idem -	- -	C.W.	- -	10	245	255	
	Auchenearn - -	- Idem -	- -	C.W.	- -	62	68	130	
	Kipperhill - -	- Idem -	- -	C.	- -	300	100	400	
	Partick and Govan -	Lanark and Renfrewshire -	5,677	C.	- -	84	346	430	614
	Strathbungo, Cathcart and Thornliebank	Lanarkshire	2,228	C.	- -	62	54	116	140
	Finnieston - -	- Idem -	- -	C.	- -	20	11	31	
	Busby - - -	- Idem -	- -	C.	- -	- -	20	20	
	Other places - -	- Idem -	- -	C.W.S.	- -	50	100	150	
	Airdrie - - -	- Idem -	9,867	C.	- -	3	1,547	1,550	1,700
	Hamilton, &c. - -	- Idem -	9,513	C.	- -	8	1,270	1,278	1,450
	Lanark and vicinity -	- Idem -	7,672	C.	- -	16	973	989	600
	Strathaven - -	- Idem -	3,597	C.W.S.	- -	200	630	830	830
	Cambuslang - -	- Idem -	2,697	C.	- -	10	510	520	620
	Larkhall, &c. - -	- Idem -	2,680	C.	- -	5	500	505	350
	Rutherglen - -	- Idem -	5,503	C.	- -	100	403	503	800
	Stonehouse - -	- Idem -	2,359	C.	- -	- -	450	450	380
	Douglas - - -	- Idem -	2,542	C.	- -	- -	280	280	300
	Kirkfieldbank and neighbourhood -	- Idem -	- -	C.	- -	54	258	312	240
	Biggar - - -	- Idem -	1,915	C.	- -	- -	240	240	300
	East Kilbride - -	- Idem -	3,789	C.	- -	30	230	260	300

TABLE of the WEAVING TOWNS and VILLAGES of *Scotland* to the South of the *Forth* and *Clyde*, &c.—*continued.*

Number.	Name of Place.	County.	Population.	Material.	LOOMS.			TOTAL LOOMS.	
					Factory.	Harness.	Plain.	1838.	1828.
	Bothwell	Lanarkshire	5,545	C.	-	-	255	255	404
	Wishawtown, &c.	Idem	3,824	W. C.	-	15	185	200	160
	Glasford and Chapleton	Idem	1,730	S. W. C.	-	-	-	180	180
	Ditto - West	Idem		S. W. C.	-	8	166	174	148
	Lesmahago	Idem	6,409	C.	-	5	195	200	170
	Carluke	Idem	3,288	C.	-	57	93	150	200
	Carnwath and Newbigging	Idem	3,505	C.	-	-	140	140	200
	Scattered places	Idem	-	C. W. S. L.	-	200	800	1,000	600
	Paisley	Renfrewshire	57,466	S. W. C. L.	112	4,487	1,000	5,599	
	Kilbarchan	Idem	4,806	S. W. C.	-	20	800	820	670
	Renfrew	Idem	2,833	C. S.	-	140	120	260	
	Pollockshaw,s Parish of Eastwood	Idem	6,854	S. W. C.	-	150	250	400	
	Eaglesham	Idem	2,372	C.	-	-	380	380	
	Port Glasgow and Greenock	Idem	United 32,763	L. C.	360	-	370	370	
	Johnston and Thorn	Idem	Included in Paisley.	W. S. C.	-	154	50	204	
	Lochwinnoch	Idem	4,515	S. W. C.	-	100	110	210	
	Elderslie	Idem	-	W. C. S.	-	155	15	170	
	Barrhead	Idem	-	W. C. S.	-	80	42	122	
	Houston, &c.	Idem	2,745	S. W. C.	-	50	-	50	
	Neilston	Idem	8,046	S. W. C.	-	40	5	45	
	Howwood	Idem	-	W. C. S.	-	30	-	30	
	Linwod	Idem	Included in Kilbarchan.	S. W. C.	-	-	21	21	
	Scattered places	Idem	-	S. W. C.	-	60	100	160	
	Girvan and vicinity	Ayrshire	6,430	C.	-	-	1,800	1,800	1,800
	Kilmarnock	Idem	United 18,093	W. C. S.	500	1,800	92	1,892	1,150
	Maybole, Crosshill and Kirkmichael	Idem	9,045	C. W.	-	8	1,352	1,360	1,700
	New Mills and Darvel	Idem	United 2,810	C.	-	430	700	1,130	800
	Ayr and suburbs	Idem	7,606	C. W.	W. 90	29	1,058	1,087	900
	Irvine	Idem	5,200	C.	-	-	580	580	702
	Saltcoats and Ardrossan	Idem	3,494	S. C.	-	6	572	578	662
	Beith	Idem	5,117	S. C. W.	-	500	-	500	500
	Galston	Idem	3,655	C.	-	104	319	423	460
	Dalry	Idem	3,739	S. C. W.	-	136	354	490	490
	Kilwinning	Idem	3,772	S. W. C.	-	60	290	350	370
	Steventon	Idem	3,544	S. C.	-	12	188	200	240
	Catrine and Mauchline	Idem	2,232	C.	-	1	174	175	300
	Cumnock	Idem	2,763	C.	-	-	130	130	
	Tarbolton	Idem	2,274	W. C. S.	-	-	122	122	122
	West Kilbride	Idem	1,685	S. C. W.	-	85	5	90	
	Kilbirnie	Idem	1,541	S. C. W.	-	40	40	80	
	Largs and vicinity	Idem	2,848	C.	-	-	150	150	
	Dalmellington and Straiton	Idem	United 2,433	W.	10	-	74	84	
	Auchenleck	Idem	1,662	W. C. S.	-	-	60	60	80
	Ballantrae	Idem	1,506	C.	-	-	65	65	
	Ochiltree	Idem	1,562	C.	-	-	30	30	
	Scattered places	Idem	-	C.	-	100	900	1,000	1,000
	Stewarton	Idem	4,503	W.	60	-	-	60	60
	Newton Stewart, &c.	Wigtonshire	3,461	C.	-	-	100	100	311
	Stranraer	Idem	3,329	C.	9	-	105	115	
	Whithorn	Idem	2,415	C.	-	-	20	20	
	Wigton	Idem	2,337	C.	-	-	13	13	
	Kirkcudbright	Kirkcudbrightshire	3,511	C.	-	-	60	60	

TABLE of the WEAVING TOWNS and VILLAGES of *Scotland* to the South of the *Forth* and *Clyde*, &c.—*continued.*

Number.	Name of Place.	County.	Population.	Material.	LOOMS.			TOTAL LOOMS.	
					Factory.	Harness.	Plain.	1838.	1828.
	Dumfries, &c.	Dumfrieshire	11,606	C.	- -	- -	450	450	550
	Ecclesfechan, &c.	Idem	- -	C.	- -	- -	265	265	130
	Annan, &c.	Idem	5,033	C.	- -	- -	260	260	360
	Gretna Green, &c.	Idem	1,909	C.	- -	- -	250	250	150
	Langholm, &c.	Idem	2,676	C.	- -	- -	250	250	300
	Sanquhar and vicinity	Idem	3,268	W. C.	36	- -	146	182	182
	Moffat	Idem	2,221	W. C.	- -	- -	38	38	
	Scattered places	Idem	- -	W. C.	- -	- -	50	50	
	Galashiels	Roxburgh & Selkirkshire	1,534	W.	250	- -	265	265	175
	Hawick	Roxburghshire	4,970	W.	84	- -	37	121	55
	Jedburgh	Idem	5,647	W. L.	43	- -	32	75	20
	Kelso	Idem	4,939	W. C. L.	4	- -	37	41	70
	Selkirk	Selkirkshire	2,883	W. C.	18	- -	33	33	20
	Earlston	Berwickshire	1,710	W. C.	14	- -	59	73	96
	Inverleithan	Peebles	810	W.	16	- -	24	24	10
	Peebles	Idem	2,750	C.	- -	- -	50	50	190
	Linton	Idem	1,577	C.	- -	- -	- -	100	
	Whitburn	Linlithgowshire	2,075	C.	- -	- -	218	218	150
	Bathgate	Idem	3,593	C.	- -	- -	520	520	
	Edinburgh	Mid Lothian	161,909	S. W. C.	48	- -	60	108	300
	Musselburgh	Idem	- -	L. Hair	101	- -	101	101	
	Leith	Idem	Included in Edinburgh	L.	100	- -	- -	100	
	Lasswade	Idem	4,252	W. S.	50	50	- -	50	21
	Canon Mills	Idem	Included in Edinburgh	W.	20	- -	- -	20	
	Cumbernauld	Dumbartonshire	3,080	C.	- -	- -	500	500	
	Kirkintilloch	Idem	5,888	C.	- -	8	1,955	1,963	1,200
	Torrance	Idem	- -	C.	- -	6	144	150	100
	Scattered	Idem	- -	C.	- -	- -	100	100	
	Kilsyth	Stirlingshire	4,294	- -	- -	6	1,014	1,020	800
	Campsie	Idem	5,109	- -	- -	- -	305	305	
	Falkirk	Idem	12,743	C.	- -	- -	180	180	
	Rothsay and Bannatyne	Bute	6,084	L. W. & C.	- -	- -	35	35	250
	Scattered looms on the Clyde & Islands	- - -	- -	W. L. C.	- -	- -	160	160	
			TOTAL - - -		3,505	11,560	37,189	51,060	

Number of Families.

With respect to "the number of families of hand-loom weavers," no accurate estimate could be formed of these, except by a census expressly made in each place. Not feeling myself authorized to involve the Government in so heavy an expense, I caused a census of Glasgow alone to be taken, and I have every reason to think that the same proportion between looms and families exists throughout Scotland. The result is given hereafter under the head of Glasgow: the following are the gross numbers: the total amount of looms employed in the Parliamentary boundaries of Glasgow is 9,085; of this number, 2,876 are used by heads of families *to whom they belong*, and 2,045 journeymen, many of them married, and all of whom "manage their own concerns," *and who hire their looms*; the proportion therefore between looms and "families" is as 9,085 to 4,921, or about nine to five. Rather better than half the number of looms will generally be the number of "families" (reckoning every weaver a family who manages his own concerns), in any given district; the remainder will be the number of children weaving.

The

South of Scotland.

Report from *J. C. Symons*, Esq.

The number of persons out of 81 families and weavers managing their own concerns, promiscuously selected in Paisley, amounted to 324, giving four individuals to each "family." Out of these, ten were single, and nine were men and their wives without children. I am of opinion that the same average would prevail throughout my district among the weavers.

At Eaglesham Mr. Matthew Hunter gave the following statement in his evidence, as the result of a minute census of the weavers in that place:—

"There are 380 looms in Eaglesham, of which 42 are at present unoccupied; 20 apprentices, 30 journeymen, 144 families (*i. e.* married persons): 40 of these families have four individuals in each, with only the husband working at the loom, and wife winding pirns, the average wages of both below 6*s.* per week: 53 families, with six individuals in each, three of which are working; the average income from 10*s.* to 12*s.* per week: 51 families, the remainder, in which there are from one to five individuals in each, all working; three or four may have one child unable to work: 620 individuals in whole depending on hand-loom."

Variations in numbers.

The variations which have occurred at different periods in the number of persons employed in each separate trade, have been, and continue to be, of so constant occurrence, that it is impossible to give more than a general answer to this branch of the inquiry.

The variations have consisted almost entirely in the transition from one fabric to another, contingently rather on the fluctuation of fashions than on any other cause; for instance, just prior to the coronation, an increased demand for the lighter fabrics, both of silk and cotton, took place, and many of the weavers who had previously been weaving other fabrics, exchanged them for the articles in more immediate demand.

The recent fashion of light woollen dresses for ladies, chiefly composed of cotton warp and woollen weft, or of woollen weft and warp, and variously designated as Mousseline de Laine, Thibets and Lamas, has caused a considerable transition of weaving from one fabric to another: in fact, the art of weaving, when once acquired, is easily adapted to any variety of work.

In some places local causes have occasioned a change of a more decided character: at Manchline the introduction of the snuff-box trade gave preferable employment to the weavers, and materially diminished their numbers. At Langholm, in consequence of the greater demand for better wages, several weavers have become agriculturists; whilst at Hawick the agriculturists are becoming weavers, in consequence of the rapid growth and healthfulness of the eastern woollen trade.

Comparatively slight variation in point of numbers has been caused by the power-loom, owing chiefly to the fineness of the staple fabrics woven in the Scottish hand-looms. A number of old men were, from 10 to 20 years ago, deprived of employment in the coarser calicoes by the power-loom, but no *very great* change in point of numbers or variation of trades among the weavers can be traced to its effect in Scotland.

CONDITION.

Pecuniary Condition.

The great bulk of the regular weavers of Scotland subsist entirely by the loom, and engage in no other pursuits; the only exception I am aware of, exists at Largs, where the weavers derive considerably higher earnings in summer from fishing and boat-letting, than from the looms, and where the looms are generally unemployed, except in winter.

This is partially the case on the coast at watering-places, but seldom elsewhere, among the regular weavers.

There are, however, another class in Scotland, called *customer weavers*, who are scattered over the whole country, but chiefly in the Highlands, who are employed by private families, and not by manufacturers, to weave the yarn supplied to them into coarse fabrics for domestic use. Most of these are agricultural labourers, and weave only in the intervals of their ordinary avocations; they earn from 1*s.* to 2*s.* 6*d.* per day, but few higher than 1*s.* 9*d.* They supply all the tools and apparatus of the loom themselves.

South of Scotland.

Report from *J. C. Symons*, Esq.

In estimating the wages earned by the regular hand-loom weavers, it is impossible to arrive at any accurate estimate of their amount, except by a computation of their gross earnings *per week*, which can be proved by the books of their employers. It is impossible to reduce their earnings to any specific rate "per hour," owing to the constant loss of time incidental to weaving, from dressing the web, repairing the material, attending the warehouse, effect of weather on the yarn, &c. &c. The wages, therefore, have been reduced to a weekly average.

The following Table indicates the number of separate trades or fabrics of hand-loom weaving in my district, the locality of each fabric, the looms employed in each, as nearly as they can be estimated, and the average rate of net wages earned in each department, and divided into two classes; the first being the average net amount earned by adult skilled artisans on the finer qualities of the fabric; the second being the average net amount earned by the less skilled and younger artisans on the coarser qualities of the fabric.

Fabrics.	District where woven.	Date of Introduction.	Residence of Chief Manufacturers.	Number of Looms.	Clear Weekly Wages.	
					1st Class.	2d Class.
					s. *d.*	*s.* *d.*
Pullicates, Ginghams, Stripes, Checks, &c.	-- Lanarkshire, especially in Airdrie, Lanark nnd Glasgow; also at Girvan, and on the west coast.	1786	Glasgow -	18,420	7 –	4 6
Shawls, Zebras, &c.	-- Renfrewshire, Paisley, Glasgow, &c.	1802 to 1806.	-- Paisley, Glasgow and Edinburgh.	7,750	10 6	6 –
Plain Muslins -	-- Lanarkshire, Glasgow, Irvine, Hamilton, Eaglesham, &c.	1784	Glasgow -	10,080	7 6	4 6
Fancy Muslins, Silk Gauzes, &c.	-- Renfrewshire and Lanarkshire.	Silk Ganze in 1760.	-- Paisley and Glasgow.	7,860	9 6	6 –
Thibets and Tartans.	-- Thibets in Lanarkshire; a few Tartans. Dalmellington, Stracton, Sanquhar and Hawick.	Thibets, 1824.	-- Glasgow and Hawick.	2,980	7 –	5 6
Carlisle Ginghams	Dumfriesshire - -	- -	Carlisle -	1,575	7 6	4 6
Woollens - -	-- South-east of Scotland, Galashiels, Hawick, Jedburgh, &c.	- -	-- Galashiels, Hawick, Jedburgh.	950	16 6	11 –
Carpets - -	-- Kirkmarnock, Glasgow and Laswade.	- -	-- Kilmarnock, Glasgow, Laswade.	865	18 –	11 –
Sail-cloths, coarse Linens and Haircloth.	-- Port Glasgow, Leith and Musselburgh.	- -	-- Port Glasgow, Leith, &c.	580	13 –	10 –
			Total -	51,060		

Wages in Woollen and Factory Districts.

The wages of the woollen weavers in Galashiels, Hawick, &c. are, it will be perceived, above 100 per cent. higher than those of the cotton weavers, to which fact I shall recur.

The weavers in factories average nearly double what the weavers make on the same cotton fabrics when woven at home. In Messrs. Johnston and Galbraith's hand-loom factory in Glasgow, the wages of the gingham weavers will run from 9*s.* to 11*s.* net per week; in the checked department from 7*s.* to 11*s.*

The number of these factory weavers is not large enough to affect the general average.

Proportion of Families, Children, and Loans.

It will be seen by this Table, that more than half the whole number of weavers are employed on the lowest paid fabrics. In the next place, the "families" being to the looms, as five is to nine, and the total number of looms being 51,060, there will be about 28,366 families, and (at the rate of four to each

each, as ascertained in Paisley), 113,464 individuals. As the 28,366 "families" indicate all the adult male weavers, it follows that 22,694 looms are worked by women and youths.

Coupling these facts (which are borne out by my investigations) with the great number of old men who come into the class of heads of families, and are unable to work hard, I am decidedly of opinion, that not less than two-thirds of the whole number of weavers belong to the second class of wages in the above Table; whilst no less than 30,075 out of the 51,060 looms are employed on the worst paid work.

Deductions.

The deduction made from the gross amount of weavers' wages (and which has been taken off in the foregoing Table), will, for the owners of looms, amount on the average, in plain work, to 1*s.* 4*d.* per week, and consists of the following items:—

	£	s.	d.
Rent of loom-shop on each loom (per annum)	–	13	–
Wear and tear of loom, dressing, twisting and all incidental expenses	1	19	–
Light and firing in the loom-shop on each loom, for six months, per annum	–	17	4
TOTAL per annum £.	3	9	4

Where the loom is hired by journeymen, from 1*d.* to 2*d.* must be added as the profit derived by the master over and above the cost of maintaining the loom and its apparatus, which are usually kept up by the owner, the rent varying from 10*d.* to 1*s.* per week.

The winding of the weft is paid for separately, in all cases except in the Carlisle fabrics, and some of the carpet factories.

Where a draw-boy is required, as in nearly all the harness-looms, from 2*s.* to 4*s.* 6*d.* is to be added to the amount of deductions, according to the complexity of the mountings.

In the country the loom-rent, and sometimes the fuel, do not amount to the sums paid in Glasgow and Paisley; but the weavers are charged with the carriage of webs, amounting to 2*d.* per week, which balances the advantage.

Other Employment.

The families of hand-loom weavers are variously occupied, but by far the most ordinary employment is that of weaving, winding the pirns, or embroidering muslins. The average amount earned by winding will not exceed 2*s.* 6*d.* per week, and this is usually done by the wife of the weaver, who can more easily blend it with her domestic labours than any other work.

The sons usually weave, and earn the second class of wages, as also the daughters, where there are no factories, in which those who get admitted, earn all rates of wages, from 3*s.* 6*d.* to 10*s.* 6*d.* per week.

Embroidery.

Embroidery, especially in Ayrshire, employs a considerable number of women, who make 3*s.* 6*d.*, 4*s.* 6*d.*, and 6*s.* per week, the largest portion earning about 4*s.* 6*d.* This work has fallen in price along with weaving.

I saw a pelerine embroidering in Lesmahago by a weaver's wife, who was reputed as being peculiarly skilful; it was of a large and beautiful pattern, on the finest muslin. She assured me she could not possibly finish it under eight days, working 14 hours per day, and the price paid her for it was 7*s.* 6*d.*

Specimens of Wages of Families.

The following examples will serve as fair specimens of the "collective earnings" of weavers' families:—

No. 1.

A man, his wife, and four children:

	Net Weekly Wages. £.	s.	d.
Father, weaving a 15°° shawl, together with second son, twelve years old, drawing for him	–	12	6
First son, fourteen years old, weaving a 14°° pullicate	–	3	10
Third son, nine years old, at school		—	
Daughter, seventeen years old, embroidering	–	4	6
Wife, winding pirns	–	2	2
TOTAL per week £.	1	3	–

Or 3*s.* 10*d.* per person.

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No. 2.

Man, wife, and five children:	Net Wages. £.	s.	d.
Father, weaving a 17°° book muslin	–	7	6
First son, eleven years old, weaving a 12°° check	–	3	4
Daughter in factory	–	3	6
Three children, young			
Wife, time partially occupied with children, winding	–	1	10
Total per week £.	–	16	2

Or 2*s*. $3\frac{5}{7}$*d*. per person.

No. 3.

Man, wife, and two children:	Net Wages. £.	s.	d.
Man, weaving a 15°° gingham	–	5	11
Wife, winding	–	2	–
Two young children			
Total per week £.	–	7	11

Or 1*s*. $11\frac{3}{4}$*d*. per person.

No. 4.

Man, wife, and five children:	Net Wages. £.	s.	d.
Father, weaving muslin	–	5	–
Eldest daughter (sick) winding	–	1	–
Four young children			
Wife, winding	–	1	2
Total per week £.	–	7	2

Or 1*s*. $\frac{2}{7}$*d*. per person.

The first and fourth are extreme cases; in the latter, the woman was evidently dying a slow death from want of food; but Nos. 2. and 3. represent the wages and distribution of labour in the great bulk of the Scottish weavers' families.

Hours worked.

The number of hours usually actually occupied in work by the domestic weavers in the cotton districts, will average 70 hours per week, exclusive of meal-time; usually 12 or 13 hours on five days of the week, and from five to ten on the Saturday. Monday is often an idle day, owing to the new webs, which are usually loomed then, an operation in which the weavers assist each other; but all idle time must be made up to realize an average wage. The time the weavers are at work is little more than half occupied in throwing the shuttle; the time spent in attending the warehouse, in beaming the warps of the new webs, and drawing or passing them through the heddles and reed, also in constantly dressing them with the paste used for the purpose, and which must be continually put on, to keep the warp moist; all these and other minutia, which cannot be correctly termed weaving, occupy a considerable portion of the 70 hours.

Wages in Factories.

This fact is proved by the higher wages earned in hand-loom factories above alluded to, although the rate of payment is lower. In the factory of the Messrs. Johnston & Galbraith, the weavers are paid for a 15°° $^4/_4$ gingham, 32 inches wide, 2*d*. per ell. For the same fabric, the domestic weavers will receive $2\frac{1}{4}$*d*. and $2\frac{3}{8}$*d*., yet the net average amount earned by the former will be at least 9*s*. per week, and by the latter 6*s*. at the very utmost, both working the same length of time. The differences result from three distinct causes; first, the factory weaver finds the web ready to his hand, and both beamed and dressed for him by machinery; he has therefore nothing to do but throw the shuttle as fast and uninterruptedly as he pleases. Secondly, a superior quality of warp yarn is usually used in factories, which breaks far less frequently, and nearly removes another and continual hindrance to the domestic weaver. Thirdly, the factory weaver being further from his home, has far fewer temptations to leave his work, even for a few minutes.

There is no constancy of employment in any branch of Scottish hand-loom weaving; all are liable to periodical stagnation, and there were few of which some portion of the weavers were not thrown wholly out of employment, during the

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the crisis of last summer; in fact, these frequent stagnations are a considerable part, though far from the whole of the grievance. In May this year 756 of the Paisley looms were idle; in two months subsequently they were all, or very nearly all, again employed; at the present time, August 1838, all the Paisley and nearly all the Glasgow looms are in full employment, and some employers have already raised wages $\frac{1}{8}d.$ to $\frac{1}{4}d.$ per ell on pullicates, and in Paisley the lower class of wages is raised by 20 per cent.

In April there were 365 idle in Glasgow; perhaps in six weeks there may be from 500 to 600 weavers seeking webs in both places.

In the check and striped ginghams a very few weeks ago the demand slackened so much, that a large hand-loom factory was compelled to work short time; even at Jedburgh, notwithstanding the extraordinary impulse recently experienced in the Scottish woollen trade, both manufacturers and weavers complained of the *inconstancy* of demand and employment.

Country Wages.

The wages of the country weavers are five per cent. less than those of the Glasgow weavers. This reduction is made on the pretext of the extra expense of agency to the manufacturer; though in some cases the weavers pay the agency, and receive the reduced rate besides.

Scotch and Irish Weavers' Wages.

The same, or nearly the same, amount of wages appears to be made by the Scottish as by the Irish weavers.

"Small Corks."

Some of the smaller manufacturers in Glasgow are known by the appellation of "small corks," and sell their goods to retail houses and shops, and are in the habit of lodging the weavers who work for them, and deduct 2*s.* or 2*s.* 6*d.* per week from their wages for loom-rent, together with lodging and cooking their food. These "corks" appear to pay the same rate of wages in other respects as the manufacturers.

Apprentices and Journeymen.

Apprentices are commonly enough received, but, in consequence of the poverty of the weavers, are very seldom indentured, and consequently stay with their master as long only as they please. They usually give half their clear earnings to the master, but the mode of payment differs in different places.

Journeymen are very common; all come under this designation in the west of Scotland who hire their looms, paying 10*d.* or 1*s.* per week for the use of them, together with mountings and materials, or 6*d.* per week when they find their own mountings, &c. The master of the looms, however, usually negociates for the journeyman's web, and procures it for him.

Charitable Aid.

Charitable subscriptions have been very generally raised in weaving towns and villages for the relief of the unemployed weavers, especially in the years 1819, 1826 and 1837, of which details will be given further on, particularly of the Relief Fund, and its appropriation in Glasgow last year. The non-existence of poor laws, as applied to the relief of able-bodied men, seems to have generated an habitual munificence in the extent of private charity, which we seldom equal in England: unlike the eleemosynary donations to the Irish poor, the relief afforded in Scotland is almost invariably applied in the shape of work. The Rev. Mr. Acheson, a gentleman who devotes himself to the improvement of the mental and physical condition of the poor in one of the poorest districts of Glasgow, among many others, informed me that he invariably found a powerful aversion on the part of the most distressed persons to receive pecuniary relief; and I have myself witnessed more than one striking instance of the sturdy strength of this noble Scottish spirit in battling with the pangs of poverty and hunger.

Election Abuses.

With the exception of Rutherglen, I have heard of no great amount of electioneering abuse; and by participation in such abuses, the weavers have been disgraced less, perhaps, than any other class.

Having now presented a summary sketch of the present pecuniary condition of the weavers, I beg to adduce extracts from the chief evidence taken by me on the foregoing points of the inquiry, which I preface by an explanation of the mode of estimating the fineness of webs, by which the wages are determined, and which will be useful for understanding many of the statements.

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DESCRIPTION of REEDS, &c. and Mode of estimating Fineness of a WEB.

Warps are the longitudinal threads which are fixed to the beam of the loom, and pass through the reeds. Wefts are the threads which cross the warps, flying backwards and forwards with the shuttle.

The reed is the comb-like instrument through which the warps are passed to keep them steady. Two warps are usually passed through every split in the reed, in the cotton fabrics.

Hence the number of splits in a reed in a given space indicates the coarseness or fineness of the web. This given space is always 37¼ inches in Scotland. "A 1500 reed" means, therefore, a web of such a degree of fineness that there will be 1500 *splits*, or 3,000 warp threads in the width of 37¼ inches.

To obviate the necessity of counting all the threads in the 37¼ inches, in order to know the reed or set or finenss of a web, glasses are made which possess the qualities of a micrometer and microscope, and which enclose a space the 200th part of 37¼ inches; the number of threads of warp, therefore, which are counted within this small space will be the 100th part of the splits of the reed contained in the 37¼ inches, and the 200th part of the warp-threads in the same space. If there be 12 threads counted, it will contain 2,400 threads in the whole width of the 37¼ inches, and consequently 1,200 splits of the reed, by which the fineness is always calculated.

A 10^{00} Scotch reed is equal to a 33 Manchester, or a 54 Stockport reed or "beir," as they calculate their webs at Manchester and Bolton by beirs of 40 ends of warp, at 24¼ inches.

Sometimes three threads are passed through one split in the Scotch cottons, which are "crams," and produce twilled fabrics.

In the woollen coarse fabrics four threads go through each split, and the word "porter" is used to designate both the total width of the cloth and the fineness.

"Porter" signifies, therefore,—

1st, 20 splits: 2dly, it is used as the term "reed," and means the number of porters, or of 20 splits in 37¼ inches: thus a "36 porter tartan" means that there are 720 splits in the 37¼ inches; this expresses the fineness, but not the *width* of the *web*, which is further expressed by saying it is 72 porters wide, which, if it be a 36 porter reed, will amount to double 37¼ inches, or 74½ inches.

EVIDENCE.

Present Wages and Condition.

Robert Walker, esq., manufacter of ginghams, pullicates and stripes, Glasgow, states—"I consider from 6*s*. 6*d*. to 7*s*. 6*d*. per week a fair average amount of what the weavers of ginghams and pullicates earn in my employ gross wages; but there are many who will make as much as 10*s*. and 12*s*. by hard work."

Mr. *Charles Kelly*, weaver of ginghams and pullicates, Glasgow, states—"His wages average 6*s*. gross, deductions 1*s*. 6*d*. per week; makes as good wages as any in the same line; works 15 hours a day."

Mr. *James Morrison*, weaver of stripes and checks, Glasgow, states—"His gross wages at 5*s*. 10*d*. per week, net wages 4*s*. 10.; has a daughter 11 years of age; makes, with witness's assistance, about 3*s*. 4*d*. per week: witness employs journeymen, who receive from him the full amount he gets from the manufacturer;" "witness shows them the tickets, so that there may be no deception on his part. The profit of witness in this transaction arises from the hire of his looms."

Mr. *John Russell*, weaver of pullicates and ginghams, Calton, Glasgow, states—"His clear wages at 5*s*. 7*d*. per week; children generally employed in factories and spinning factories; girls generally preferred; more than two-thirds of the girls thus employed 16 years of age and upwards; average 6*s*. per week; harvest-work in summer; wages little more than 1*s*. per day, owing to Irish competition."

James Hutchison, esq., manufacturer of plain muslins, Glasgow, states—"Wages at present average from 7*s*. to 12*s*. per week, from which sums 1*s*. 2*d*. to 1*s*. 6*d*. per week is to be deducted for loom-stead, coal, candle, &c."

"Able-bodied

"Able-bodied weavers are not entitled when out of employment, unless sick, to parochial aid, but subscription have been raised, applied by means of webs or other work, so that relief of this description was given in the shape of labour.

"The webs above named have been given out at somewhat lower wages than the rate for independent labour in the same department.

"Not aware of any difference between the Scotch and Irish industry."

The Messrs. *Scott* & *Strang*, manufacturers of pullicates, ginghams and muslins, Glasgow, state—"The average clear earnings of their weavers, including men, women and children, to have been, in 1831, 5*s.* 6*d.* per week; in 1832, 4*s.* 3*d.*; in 1833, 4*s.* 8*d.*; in 1834, 5*s.* 1*d.*; in 1835, 5*s.* 9½*d.*; in 1836, 6*s.* 6*d.*; in 1837 and in 1838, 4*s.* 4*d.*"

They state the deduction made in this estimate at 8*d.* per week only, and the number of hours usually worked by the weavers, at 14 per day.

James Davidson, esq., manufacturer of muslins, Glasgow, states—"That the gross weekly average wage atthis period is 8*s.* 4*d.*, and the deductions 1*s.* 4*d.* per week.

"This average applies to industrious men with families; although the prices are lower at this date than they were in 1828, yet the average is the same, that is, 7*s.* per week; this can only be accounted for by the weavers working longer hours than they did 10 years ago."

Mr. *David Allan*, weaver of muslins, Glasgow, states—"His net wages to be 3*s.* 6*d.*, but time taken up in attending other looms in his house; but the average gross rate for a good workman in book-muslins, would be from 6*s.* 6*d.* to 7*s.*; children from eight to twelve years, 2*s.* per week.

"No winding to pay, the manufacturers do that at their own expense; heddles, brushes, dressing tallow, beaming, twisting, oil and fire, 1*s.* 6*d.* per week.

"A number employ their children in the cotton spinning department of power-loom factories; witness does not.

"Clever girls of 15 to 20 will make 8*s.* weekly, those of younger age from 4*s.* to 5*s.* weekly; the boys are either employed at home on harness looms, or are got out to tradesmen.

"No parochial aid to weavers in Scotland. Donations and subscription aid consisted, as far as weavers were concerned, in giving webs to weave at lower wages than the manufacturers were giving; soup and such aid was not generally received by the weavers, who considered it discreditable to avail themselves of it; a vast number of the distressed weavers were relieved by out-door labour; they were employed chiefly on the bank of the Clyde, or in breaking stones, from 1*s.* to 1*s.* 4*d.* per day, according to their abilities and strength; this took place last summer, and has been done repeatedly about Glasgow."

Mr. *John M'Farlane*, weaver of muslins, Glasgow, states—"His net wages at 5*s.* 7*d.*, gross 7*s.* 1*d.*; the same number of hours worked in 1814 would have produced about four times as much money as now, in 1824; 1825 twice as much in the same time and same description of work; in 1826 wages fell one-half, that is, to the same amount they now are; wages fell still lower in 1829, and rose a little afterwards, in 1832 to 1835.

"Journeymen are worse off by 2*d.* per week."

Alexander Johnston, esq., manufacturer, Glasgow, states—"That the hand-loom weavers in his factory average about 9*s.* per week net, and that the weavers in his employ in the country average from 5*s.* 6*d.* to 6*s.* net; difference accounted for by economy in dressing by machinery, and in time lost by sending webs to the country."

Mr. *Duncan Sinclair*, weaver of plain fabrics, Paisley, states—"The fair net average wages per week in Paisley at 8*s.*; wife is winding pirns, 1*s.* 9*d.* average per week; young women sewing the middles of the shawls to the borders, 14 hours work per diem; most weavers have their own looms, but journeymen pay for zebra looms as much as 2*s.* per week, and for red shawl looms 3*s.* per week; great distress amongst unemployed; those who are full employed are about the same off as common labourers, in 1829, however wages were the same as now."

Mr. *John Parkhill*, weaver of shawls, Paisley, states—"The gross average wages of the best description of harness work, shawls, 15*s.*, deductions (hire of

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loom 3*s.*, draw-boy 4*s.*) 7*s.* per week; thinks 6*s.* will be the nearest average for deductions. Sometimes weavers will average 14*s.* to 20*s.*, but this only for a very limited time; buckrams, the lowest description of work, 3*s.* to 4*s.* per week; these chiefly woven by boys and old men; women make at sewing, whilst fully employed 16 hours per day, 8*s.* or 9*s.* per week; this varies according to the season of the year; frequently great scarcity of employment; they are fully employed now, although numbers of the weavers are idle.

"Many of the children employed in thread factories making 4*s.* per week average wages; some hundreds employed in this way; great proportion weavers and widows of weavers' children.

"Those having young families worst off; considers the weavers as badly off as the common labourer.

"A great many Irish come here whose families are employed as draw-boys at first; they very soon get to be weavers, thus creating a redundancy of hands."

Hugh Macfarlane, esq., manufacturer of shawls, &c. Paisley, states—"Medium class of shawls, wages from 11*s.* to 17*s.* per week, average 13*s.* 9*d.* gross, including alterations and time in making changes, but not the outlay: deductions, draw-boy, loom-stead-fire, light, &c. 6*s.* 6*d.*, net wages 7*s.* 3*d.*; gross wages in thibets 7*s.*, deductions 1*s.* 3*d.*, net 5*s.* 9*d.*; checks, chiefly worked by boys and girls, 6*s.* gross, deductions 1*s.* 3*d.*, net wages 4*s.* 9*d.* per week: 5*s.* to 6*s.* per week fair average wages for women employed in factories in sewing. Hours worked, exclusive of meal-hours, 12 per diem."

James Porter, esq., manufacturer of shawls, Paisley, states—"The wages of superior workmen at 20*s.* to 22*s.*; second class, 15*s.*; third class, 12*s.*; in shawls gross wages per week, from which the necessary deductions for draw-boy, loom-rent, fire and light, must be taken.

"Women engaged in warehouses sewing, when constantly employed, average 6*s.* 9*d.* per week."

Archibald Yuill, esq, manufacturer of shawls, Paisley, states—"That he has one weaver who during nearly two years has changed his work three times, who has averaged 15*s.* 0½*d.* per week; has another who only makes 4*s.* per week; and others who have earned 32*s.* per week, these skilled weavers, and work regularly. Thinks 16*s.* per week a fair average for the best work; best shawls, 25*s.* 6*d.*; lower description, 9*s.* 2*d.*, as maximum of ten weavers of each taken promiscuously. Deductions from 5*s.* to 6*s.*, independent of changes; common shawl weavers average 7*s.* 11½*d.*

"Sewing does not rise and fall with the weaving at present, although the weaving is dull. Many of the weavers may have their wives and children engaged in sewing shawl-borders and fringes. Girls employed by witness paid 7*s.* per week."

The Committee of the Weavers at Dumfries, stated—"The gross weekly wages at 6*s.*; deductions for winding, fire, light, loom-rent, &c. 2*s.*; clear wages, 4*s.* for the best weavers; 10°° 76 porter gingham, 8*s.* 6*d.* per cut; this is an extra width, or double web.

"One shilling is now inserted on the ticket of the manufacturers to be paid only '*if approved*,' because they were often beaten when summoned before the magistrates when they made deductions on the weavers' wages, which they can now do with impunity.

"Considers the weavers' condition much worse than any other class.

"Three hundred pounds were given out last year in aid generally."

Mr. *John Anderson*, agent, Dumfries, states—"That he considers 4*s.* 3*d.* a fair average of the clear earnings of the Dumfries weavers of ginghams and stripes, per week."

Mr. *Alex. M'Millan*, weaver at Ecclefechan, stated—"That he can weave one cut of 60 yards of a 10°° gingham, 82 porters, 9 shots on glass, in 70 hours, including all incidental work, such as beaming, twisting and dressing, &c.; price of this cut was 9*s.* gross wages; deductions 1*s.* 3½*d.* for winding, 1*s.* 5*d.* for loom-rent, &c.; total 2*s.* 8½*d.*, leaving 6*s.* 3½*d.* clear wages; considerably above the average rate earned in Ecclefechan."

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Mr. *Robert Lattimer*, weaver at Langholm, handed in the following items of "gross wages earned by two weavers in the employ of Messrs. J. Ferguson, Carlisle :—

"Sir,

"We forward you an account of the wages received from us from December 1st, 1837, to June 1st, 1838.

"Thomas Lattimer - - - - £. 11 6 –
"Alexander Johnston - - - - 7 6 –

(signed) "For *John Ferguson*,
"*James Graham*."

Messrs. *Dicksons & Laings*, manufacturers, at Hawick, of trowser stuffs, shepherds' plaids, coarse woollen shawls and tartans, handed in the following average of wages paid by them to the under-noted weavers, for six weeks, from the 1st of April 1838 :—

	£.	s.	d.
David Lowrie - - - -	–	12	1
John Douglas, sen. - - - -	–	15	2½
John Douglas, jun. - - - -	–	18	11
George Halliday - - - -	–	14	2
James Christie - - - -	–	11	–½
James Lamb - - - - -	–	15	4
John Buchanan - - - - -	–	8	3
Robert Bryden - - - - -	1	3	5
Peter Leyden - - - - -	–	18	4
Richard Purdie - - - - -	1	–	–½
Walter Scott - - - - -	–	15	4
Alexander Thomson - - - -	–	10	8½
John Park - - - - - -	–	13	4
	£. 9	16	2

--10 per cent. deducted off these wages for winding and light.

(signed) *D. & L.*

being an average of 15*s.* 1*d.* per week.

(signed) *Dicksons & Laings.*

Messrs. *J. & W. Cochrane*, manufacturers, at *Galashiels*, of trowser stuffs and coarse cloths, handed in the following statement of wages paid by them :—

1837:	£.	s.	£.
May 27, 12 weavers -	43	14	–
June 24, 12 - ditto - -	21	9	–
July 22, 11 - ditto - -	23	13	6
Aug. 19, 11 - ditto - -	28	14	6
Sept. 16, 12 - ditto - -	46	5	–
Oct. 14, 13 - ditto - -	34	11	6
Nov. 11, 13 - ditto - -	39	15	6
Dec. 9, 13 - ditto - -	42	17	–

1838:	£.	s.	d.
Jan. 6, 13 weavers -	40	14	–
Feb. 3, 13 - ditto - -	24	7	–
Mar. 3, 14 - ditto - -	32	–	–
— 31, 14 - ditto - -	38	12	–
April 28, 14 - ditto - -	30	18	–
£.	447	11	–

Average - - - - £. 2. 14*s.* 3*d.* per month.

Tables of Hand-loom Wages.

The following TABLES have been carefully collected from the returns made by several of the leading manufacturers, agents for manufacturers, and weavers in Glasgow and elsewhere. On the general accuracy of them full reliance may be placed, as affording a correct view of the decline in wages during a period of 43 years.

TABLE, No. 1.—AVERAGE RATE of WAGES paid by the Firm of Messrs. *James Hutchison & Co., Glasgow*, for PLAIN MUSLINS.

		s.	d.
1816	net per week	17	2
1817 to 1820	ditto	14	6
1821	ditto	14	5
1822	ditto	13	11
1823	ditto	12	5
1824	ditto	12	10
1825	ditto	15	–
1826	ditto	9	5
1827	ditto	8	11
1828	ditto	9	2
1829	net per week	7	11
1830	ditto	6	5
1831	ditto	6	5
1832	ditto	6	9
1833	ditto	6	6
1834	ditto	8	1
1835	ditto	8	2
1836	ditto	8	10
1837	ditto	7	9
1838	ditto	7	2

(signed) *Graham Hutchison.*

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TABLE, No. 2.—Showing Wages, Decrease in Looms, &c. in the *Glasgow*, Harness Shawls. (Furnished by Mr. *John Bennet*, Harness Weaver, *Anderston*.)

Period.	Number of Hand-Looms used.	Number of Hours actually employed.	Total Earnings per Week, net.	Period.	Number of Hand-Looms used.	Number of Hours actually employed.	Total Earnings per Week, net.
			s. *d.*				*s.* *d.*
1810 to 1816 -	1,300	72	20 –	1829 - -	751	73	10 6
1817 to 1820 -	1,250	72	17 6	1830 - -	700	73	10 –
1821 - -	1,200	72	13 10	1831 - -	650	73	10 –
1822 - -	1,150	72	13 6	1832 - -	600	73	9 9
1823 - -	1,100	72	13 –	1833 - -	550	73	9 11
1824 - -	1,050	72	12 –	1334 - -	520	73	9 8
1825 - -	1,000	72	13 –	1835 - -	470	74	9 9
1826 - -	904	73	10 9	1836 - -	460	74	9 9
1827 - -	853	73	10 9	1837 - -	450	74	9 6
1828 - -	802	73	10 6	1838 - -	380	74	8 3

TABLE, No. 3.—Average Gross and Clear Wages per Week of an individual Weaver, from the Year 1795 to 1813, and for the particular Descriptions of Work undermentioned. (Furnished by Mr. *Robert Galloway*, Agent, of *Lanark*, and verified by the Preses of the Weavers' Committee in that Town.)

Years.	Description of Work.	Average Prices of Weaving per Ell of 45 Inches.	Gross Average Wage of one Weaver per Week.	Clear Average Wage of one Weaver per Week.
		£. *s.* *d.*	£. *s.* *d.*	£. *s.* *d.*
1795 -	12^{00} pullicate - - - -	– – 9	1 2 6	1 1 –
1800 -	12^{00} - ditto - - -	– – 8	1 – –	– 18 6
1802 -	14^{00} - ditto - superfine - -	– 1 2	1 8 –	1 6 6
1805 -	9^{00} stripe - - - -	– – 9	1 2 6	1 1 –
1807 -	9^{00} - ditto - - - -	– – 7	– 17 6	– 16 –
„ -	13^{00} pullicate - - - -	– – 6	– 15 –	– 13 6
1808 -	13^{00} - ditto - - - -	– – 6½	– 16 3	– 14 9
1809 -	14^{00} - superfine - - -	– – 9½	– 19 –	– 17 6
1810 -	9^{00} stripe - - - -	– – 7	– 17 6	– 16 –
1811 -	9^{00} - ditto - - - -	– – 5	– 12 6	– 11 –
1812 -	9^{00} - ditto - - - -	– – 4	– 11 3	– 9 9
1813 -	9^{00} - ditto - - - -	– – 5	– 12 6	– 11 –
-				

TABLE, No. 4.—Rate per Ell for Weaving a 16^{00} 6/4, or 54 Inch wide, 2 in the Breadth Pullicate, in each of the Years, from 1806 to 1838 inclusive; together with the Net Weekly Wages earned.

1806 - -	15 *d.* per ell	- 32/6 per week.	1823 - -	6 *d.* per ell	- 12/3 per week
1807 - -	12 *d.* „	- 25/9 „	1824 - -	6 *d.* „	- 12/3 „
1808 - -	11 *d.* „	- 23/ „	1825 - -	5 *d.* „	- 10/ „
1809 - -	10 *d.* „	- 21/3 „	1826 - -	4½ *d.* „	- 8/3 „
1810 - -	12½ *d.* „	- 26/9 „	1827 - -	5 *d.* „	- 10/ „
1811 - -	9 *d.* „	- 18/ „	1828 - -	3½ *d.* „	- 6/7 „
1812 - -	12 *d.* „	- 25/9 „	1829 - -	3¼ *d.* „	- 6/ „
1813 - -	11½ *d.* „	- 24/9 „	1830 - -	3 *d.* „	- 5/6 „
1814 - -	12½ *d.* „	- 26/9 „	1831 - -	3 *d.* „	- 5/6 „
1815 - -	12 *d.* „	- 25/9 „	1832 - -	3 *d.* „	- 5/6 „
1816 - -	6 *d.* „	- 12/3 „	1833 - -	3 *d.* „	- 5/6 „
1817 - -	6 *d.* „	- 12/3 „	1834 - -	3½ *d.* „	- 6/7 „
1818 - -	7½ *d.* „	- 15/9 „	1835 - -	3½ „	- 6/7 „
1819 - -	8 *d.* „	- 16/9 „	1836 - -	3⅞ *d.* „	- 7/5 „
1820 - -	5 *d.* „	- 10/ „	1837 - -	3⅜ *d.* „	- 6/3 „
182 - -	6 *d.* „	- 12/3 „	1838 - -	3½ *d.* „	- 6/7 „
1822 - -	6 *d.* „	- 12/3 „			

(signed) *John Ker*, Manufacturer, Glasgow.

TABLE,

TABLE, No. 5.—Showing the Change in the Rate of Wages in each Chief Branch of Hand-loom Weaving, from 1810 to 1838, divided into two Classes; the first Class being the net average Rate earned by inferior Weavers on inferior Work, and the second the Average of the skilled Weavers on the best Work.

——	Glasgow Ginghams and Pullicates.		Carlisle Ginghams, &c.		Glasgow Plain Muslins.		Glasgow Fancy Muslins and Silk Gauzes.		Paisley Shawls.		Zebras and Dresses.		Woollen Stuffs, Plaids, &c.		Carpets.	
Period.	1st Class.	2d Class.	1st Class.	2d Class.	1st Class.	2d Class.	1st Class.	2d Class.	1st Class.	2d Class.	1st Class.	2d Class.	1st Class.	2d Class.	1st Class.	2d Class.
1810 to 1816	17/	24/6	–	–	13/6	17/2	10/6	20/	23/	26/6	9/1 ½	15/	–	–	11/	
1816 to 1820	10/	13/5	–	–	9/	14/6	10/3	18/	17/6	24/	10/5	15/				
1821 - -	9/6	12/2	–	–	9/	14/5	10/3	18/	13/10	24/6	8/7	12/6				
1822 - -	9/6	12/2	–	–	8/9	13/11	10/3	16/6	13/6	24/6	6/3	11/				
1823 - -	9/6	12/2	–	–	8/3	12/5	10/3	15/9	12/6	24/6	6/11	11/				
1824 - -	9/6	12/2	–	–	8/6	12/10	10/	14/	12/	24/	7/4	11/6				
1825 - -	7/6	10/	–	–	9/	15/	9/6	13/	13/	25/6	8/10	12/8				
1826 - -	6/6	8/2	–	–	7/2	9/5	9/	12/6	9/6	16/9	4/9	7/				
1827 - -	7/6	10/	–	–	6/9	8/11	8/6	11/3	9/6	16/9	7/7	10/6				
1828 - -	6/6	8/5	–	–	7/	9/2	8/6	11/3	9/	12/6	5/6	8/6				
1829 - -	6/6	8/	–	–	6/3	7/11	8/6	11/3	8/9	11/6	5/8	8/9				
1830 - -	6/	7/6	7/	8/1	5/3	6/5	7/9	10/6	9/6	12/6	6/3	8/	15/	18/		
1831 - -	6/	7/6	6/4	7/6	5/6	6/5	7/9	10/6	10/6	13/6	6/9	8/	15/	18/		
1832 - -	5/9	7/	6/4	7/6	4/2	6/9	7/6	10/6	9/9	12/2	5/6	8/	15/	18/		
1833 - -	5/3	6/6	6/4	7/4	4/8	6/6	7/6	10/6	10/2	13/6	7/8	8/6	14/	17/		
1834 - -	6/6	7/3	7/9	9/6	5/1	8/1	7/4	10/6	9/8	15/6	6/10	8/	13/	15/		
1835 - -	6/8	7/9	6/3	8/9	5/9	8/2	7/4	10/9	10/8	15/6	7/2	9/	12/	14/		
1836 - -	5/9	7/6	5/6	7/5	6/6	8/10	7/	10/6	12/	15/2	7/6	8/	12/	16/9		
1837 - -	4/3	6/6	4/3	6/2	4/6	7/9	5/	9/6	8/4	13/2	8/	8/6	11/	16/9		
1838 - -	4/6	7/	4/6	7/6	4/6	7/6	6/	9/6	6/6	13/2	6/3	7/6	11/	16/9	–	18/

Collated from various manufacturers' books.

Wages in other Trades.

The following Tables comprise the fullest information I have been able to obtain as to the rate of wages in other trades; and which I insert for facility of comparison, in juxta position with the foregoing.

I have spared no endeavour to execute your instructions on this collateral branch of the inquiry in considerable detail. That I have not better succeeded, I attribute to the terrorism of combinations, which, by rendering investigation difficult, afforded a proof of its importance.

TABLE, No. 1.—Rates of Wages in other Trades.

TRADES.	1810.	1810 to 1820.	1820 to 1825.	1825 to 1830.	1830 to 1835.	1838.
Bricklayers - - - - -	17/	16/				
Bootmakers - - - - -	20/	18/	15/	15/	16/	16/
Bootclosers - - - - -	22/6	20/	20/	20/	20/	20/
Brassfounders - - - - -	- -	- -	18/5	18/5	19/	20/
Breakers of Metal - - - -	- -	- -	- -	- -	- -	9/ & 10/
Cotton Spinners - - - -	- -	- -	- -	20/2	26/1	28/10
Carding Masters - - - -	- -	- -	- -	17/9	16/10	17/6
Cabinetmakers - - - - -	19/	18/	18/	16/	18/	18/ & 20/
Coopers - - - - -	16/	16/				
Calenderers - - - - -	15/	15/	15/	15/	15/	15/
Calico-printers - - - - -	18/	18/	18/	18/	18/	18/
Dyers - - - - - -	- -	- -	- -	- -	- -	12/
Fleshers - - - - - -	15/	15/				
Forgers - - - - - -	- -	- -	- -	- -	22/	22/
Factory Dressers - - - -	- -	- -	- -	- -	- -	18/10
„ Twisters - - - -	- -	- -	- -	- -	- -	8/4
„ Warpers - - - -	- -	- -	- -	- -	- -	9/6
Gardeners - - - - -	15/	- -	12/	12/	12/	12/
Hatters - - - - - -	- -	- -	- -	- -	25/	22/
Joiners and House Carpenters - -	18/	- -	- -	- -	- -	20/
Ironfounders - - - - -	- -	- -	- -	- -	26/	26/
Labourers (Building) - - -	11/	11/	- -	- -	- -	12/
Masons - - - - - -	17/	- -	- -	- -	18/	19/
Plumbers - - - - - -	22/6	-	25/	25/	25/	25/
Painters - - - - -	17/	17/	- -	- -	- -	16/6

(continued.)

South of Scotland.

Report from *J. C. Symons*, Esq.

TABLE, No. 1.—RATES of WAGES in other Trades—*continued.*

TRADES.	1810.	1810 to 1820.	1820 to 1825.	1825 to 1830.	1830 to 1835.	1838.
Plasterers	21/	21/	-	-	20/	20/
Patternmakers	-	-	-	-	21/6	21/6
Smiths	-	-	-	-	18/	18/
Slaters	16/6	20/	20/	20/	20/	20/
Sawyers	24/	24/	24/	24/	24/	24/
Shoemakers	15/	-	-	-	-	11/6
Tailors	19/	19/	-	-	-	20/
Toppers in Spinning Factory	-	-	-	-	14/	14/
Turners	-	-	-	-	23/6	23/6

TABLE, No. 2.—COLLIERS' WAGES.

—	Average Earnings per Day.	Average Earnings per Week, assuming 4½ Days of 10 Hours, as the average Quantity of Work wrought by each Collier per Week, with House free and Coal free, except his own Labour in producing it.	House-rent per Week, taking the average of the Houses at £. 60. per annum.	Value of Coal, after deducting the Price paid the Collier for his part of Work in producing, taking one Cart as the average Consumption of three Weeks, the Cart being 12 Cwt.	Total Earnings per Week, including House-rent and Coals.
1811	4/11	22/1½	1/2	1/5	24/8½
1812	4/11	22/1½	1/2	1/3	24/6½
1813	4/	18/	1/2	1/3	20/5
1814	4/3	19/1½	1/2	1/2	21/5½
1815	4/6	20/3	1/2	1/	22/5
1816	4/7	20/7½	1/2	1/	22/9
1817	4/	18/	1/2	9*d.*	19/11
1818	3/8	16/6	1/2	9*d.*	17/5
1819	3/11	17/7½	1/2	9*d.*	19/6½
1820	3/9	16/10½	1/2	9*d.*	18/9½
1821	3/3	14/7½	1/2	11*d.*	16/6½
1822	3/6	15/9	1/2	11*d.*	17/10
1823	3/7	16/1½	1/2	10*d.*	18/1½
1824	4/2	18/9	1/2	1/1	20/
1825	5/3	23/7½	1/2	1/8	26/5½
1826	5/	22/6	1/2	1/	24/8
1827	4/3	19/1½	1/2	6*d.*	20/9½
1828	4/3	19/1½	1/2	8*d.*	20/11½
1829	4/3	19/1½	1/2	6*d.*	20/9½
1830	4/3	19/1½	1/2	8*d.*	20/11½
1831	3/11	17/7½	1/2	6*d.*	19/3½
1832	4/1	18/4½	1/2	6*d.*	20/½
1833	4/	18/	1/2	6*d.*	19/8
1834	4/	18/	1/2	7*d.*	19/9
1835	4/	18/	1/2	7*d.*	19/9
1836	4/9	21/4½	1/2	1/2	23/8½
1837	5/	22/6	1/2	1/4	25/
1838	4/6	20/3	1/2	1/2	22/7
July	3/6	15/9	1/2	6*d.*	17/5

Remarks subjoined to the foregoing Table.

"The colliers of this district generally (before 1824) combined when they had any object to attain, and struck work when they could not accomplish it otherwise. Those at Govan colliery struck work in 1821 to obtain an advance of wages; labourers were employed in their stead, by which their object was defeated; and, after a strike of 11 weeks, they returned to their work on lower terms than what they had previous to the strike.

"In 1824 the wages were at 3*s.* 4*d.* per day: the colliers of Govan colliery then entered into a union with the other colliers in Lanark, Renfrew and Dumbartonshires, which had the effect of raising their wages to 5*s.* per day. This union, so far as regarded Govan colliery, was put an end to by the formation of a Friendly and Free-labour Society at the colliery in 1826; no person was employed

employed at the colliery after the formation of which, who did not become a member of that society. The workmen were thus relieved from the pernicious effects of strikes, while they participated in the benefit of any rise of wages effected by the unionists.

"The colliers of the union struck in 1837, to oppose a reduction of wages, from 5*s.* to 4*s.* per day, intimated to them by all their employers; intimation of a similar reduction was given to those of Govan colliery, which intimation did not expire or take effect until the unionists had been idle for eight weeks: the latter, understanding then that the Govan colliery men were inclined to continue at the reduced wages, sent a deputation to them, stating, that if they did so, they would be obliged to begin also, and that the whole odium of breaking the wages would remain upon the men of Govan colliery. In this dilemma, they applied to their employer in a respectful manner, begging to be allowed to be idle while the dispute was pending, and thereby be relieved of the blame and the reproach from their fellow-workmen, but at the same time they intimated their intention of continuing their work, if permission was not granted.

"Their employer, considering from the first that the reduction was uncalled for, permitted them to be idle, and they continued so for 13 weeks, when they resumed work at the intimated reduction.

"Govan Colliery, (signed) "*James Allan*,
3 August 1838." Manager".

TABLE, No. 3.—The Rates of Agricultural Wages, furnished chiefly by the Sheriffs' Clerks in the under-named Counties.

Lanarkshire.

Ploughmen 2*s.* 3*d.* per day; farm labourers 2*s.* per day; trenchers 2*s.* per day; forresters 2*s.* 8*d.* and 3*s.* per day, or 16*s.* and 18*s.* per week; women 1*s.* 5*d.* per day; dairy-maids from 4*l.* to 7*l.* half yearly, with board.—(Furnished by *John Maxwell*, esq., of *Pollock*.)

Renfrewshire.

In 1837 female servants were hired for the half year, at from 3*l.* 10*s.* to 4*l.* 10*s.* of wages, besides bed and board; male servants, ploughmen from 10*l.* to 11*l.*, besides 2*s.* bed and board.—(Sheriff's clerk.)

Ayrshire.

There are no fixed rate of wages in this country: they average from 9*s.* to 11*s.*—(*Idem.*)

Dumfriesshire.

Able-bodied men, wages per half year 5*l.* 15*s.*; women 2*l.* 15*s.* with board; agricultural labourers, summer 1*s.* 6*d.* per day of ten hours, winter 1*s.* 3*d.* per day, from day-light, without victuals; cottages and garden 2*l.* 10*s.* per year; women's wages 4*s.*, boys 4*s.* per week: diet—bacon, potatoes, oatmeal and milk.

Agricultural wages fell 30 per cent. after the war, and remained stationary till now, when they are rather creeping up, in consequence of the improvements.—(Furnished by —— *Smith*, esq., *Dumfries*.)

Perthshire.

Rate of wages paid to agricultural and other labourers in the county of Perth for years 1837, 1838:—

	£.		
Ploughmen per annum, money - - - - -	13	–	–
One pint sweet milk per day, at 3*d.* - - - -	4	11	3
Two pecks oatmeal per week 1*s.* - - - -	–	4	–
Lodgings, say at the rate of 1*s.* per week - - -	2	12	–
	£. 25	7	3

Day-labourers are paid during the winter months at the rate of 8*s.* per week, and in summer at the rate of 11*s.* per week; in all, say 24*l.* 14*s.* per annum.—(Sheriff's clerk.)

Wigton.

Average wages of a labourer per day in the upper district of the county, June 1837, 1*s.* 3*d.* per day; December 1837, 1*s.* 2*d.*; in the lower district of the county in June 1837, 1*s.* 4*d.*; December 1837, 1*s.* 3*d.*; and the average wages per annum of a farm servant who lives in his master's house is 10*l.* in the upper district, and 11*l.* in the lower district of the county.

Average wages per annum of a farm cottier 21*l.* in the upper, and 24*l.* in the lower district.—(*Idem.*)

South of Scotland.

Report from *J. C. Symons*, Esq.

ROXBURGH.

Average weekly rate of wages of the different classes of agricultural labourers in the county of Roxburgh:—

	£.		
1. Ordinary labourers	–	10	6
2. Hinds, or ploughmen, paid wholly in money, and including house-rent	–	11	9½
3. Hinds, or ploughmen, paid partly in money and partly in kind, viz. portion of meal, barley and peas, potatoes planted, and cow maintained, and also including house-rent	–	12	5½
4. Shepherds paid in kind, and also including house-rent	–	12	9½
5. Women's wages from 1st March to 1st December	–	5	–
Ditto from 1st December to 1st March	–	4	–

(*Idem.*)

BERWICKSHIRE.

The average rate of wages paid to the farm servants in this district, have amounted for these three years past to fully 30*l.* per annum, paid partly in cash, and partly in grain, and includes the value of a cow's keep on the farm. Those hired by the week, are paid from 9*s.* to 10*s.* per week: a number of the weavers of Dunse have been for a considerable period paid that sum for their out-door labour, and are now very expert spadesmen.

Labourers' wages on the advance.—(*Idem.*)

DUMBARTONSHIRE.

The different rate of wages now paid to the several classes of the agricultural labourers are, 1*s.* 6*d.*, 1*s.* 8*d.*, 1*s.* 10*d.*, 1*s.* 11*d.*, 2*s.*, 2*s.* 2*d.*, and 2*s.* 4*d.*, per day, averaging 11*s.* 6*d.* per week. This considered rather a high average, 10*s.* per week being more like the true one.—(*Idem.*)

ARGYLESHIRE.

Average rate of wages paid to men, 1*s.* 6*d.* to 2*s.* a day; if the labourer is employed for a length of time, he usually gets 1*s.* 6*d.* a day for all kinds of work, and at any time of the year; if only employed during harvest, he usually gets 2*s.*; when provisions are given, 6*d.* less is usually paid.

Women are in some cases during harvest paid equal to a man, and in other cases 6*d.* less than that paid to a man.—(*Idem.*)

Physical Condition of Cotton Weavers.

The homes of the cotton weavers (which I was during my whole inquiry constantly visiting) but too well attest the reality of their generally depressed condition; their food is usually of a coarse description, and often deficient in quantity: with regard to the universal use of porridge and pease-brose, it must, however, be borne in mind, that these have from time immemorial formed the staple articles of Scottish food, and are at this hour in daily use at the tables of the wealthiest families in Scotland. I saw Mr. Kirkman Finlay at his princely dwelling at Castle Toward make a hearty breakfast on porridge alone, and he told me it was his custom to do so. The ordinary dietary of a Scottish cotton weaver consists of porridge or brose, but sometimes only potatoes, for breakfast; of potatoes and a piece of fat melted down among them for dinner; often also of soup made of vegetables, and sometimes, but only occasionally, flavoured with a bit of bacon or coarse meat: meat by itself I may safely assert never forms a dish, except among the minority of weavers whose wages exceed the average of the second class, or those who have obtained profitable employment for their families, who happen to board with them; tea seems the only luxury to which weavers cling, and which they generally regard as essential to the discharge of their lengthened and monotonous toil.

The furniture in most of the weavers dwellings is scanty and miserable; their beds are often of straw, and seldom among the poorer class are they provided with clothing by day or covering at night so good as the common day-labourers, either in Scotland or in England; sometimes I found articles of massive and even handsome furniture, the relics of former and happier days, still treasured up with a pride which poverty cannot subjugate, and contrasting painfully with the pauper meal and care-worn features of the impoverished owner; in fact, to me it appears that the hardship of their case, as regards at least the elder class of the weavers, consists less in the actual scantiness of their means, than in the bitterness of the contrast between past and present times: the income which formerly raised them as high, if not higher in social rank, than any other class of Scottish artisans, is gone from them; but the intelligence and education which then enhanced their prosperity, remains now to embitter their poverty: the case is far

less

less painful of the younger generation, who have been for the most part accustomed to but little more means than they possess; and whose tone of mind and scale of education render the evils of a low physical condition less grievous and galling. South of Scotland. Report from *J. C. Symons*, Esq.

In many places, especially on the western coast, in Dumfriesshire, and in most of the agricultural districts, the weavers are accustomed to obtain land from the farmers; sometimes on the payment of a small rental, and sometimes for one or two days' labour at shearing or harvest time, but far oftener for the manure they bring to the land: in these plots of ground they set potatoes, and generally manage to obtain enough to feed their families on for nine or ten months of the year, unless the farmers exact payment, or the land requires an extra degree of manuring, and, consequently, a greater amount of labour and time be required. I am inclined to think that this practice is a great advantage to the weaver, and that but for it, he would be wholly unable, in times of stagnation and want of employment, to subsist at all: a contrary opinion was, however, expressed by the provost of Annan, and by Mr. Galloway of Lanark, who were both of opinion, that more time was lost than the difference amounted to between the setting and buying of potatoes. The weavers are occasionally enabled in a good season to produce more than they want of potatoes, and sell the surplus. Stores or shops of the ordinary commodities in demand, are sometimes established by the weavers themselves, and they are enabled to save the profit of the retail tradesmen in the cost of their provisions; but this practice is by no means general, In fact, both in this respect and with regard to friendly societies in the poorer districts, the weavers seem too dejected to attempt helping themselves by these means, and, in fact, the necessary capital to begin with is generally wanting. Setting Potatoes.

The Irish weavers are, on the whole, in a worse condition than the Scotch; but then again they are much more contented under privation; they often club together in one house, two and three families together; hence a slight economy in fuel, &c. Difference between Scotch and Irish.

The Irish weavers are a little in advance in the career down hill, for they are the main cause of pulling the Scotch down after them. Of course they are in a slightly better condition than in their own country, which is precisely the reason why they take the lead in the career downwards, having less natural repugnance to privations which they have been previously in some measure inured to: when a manufacturer desires to lower his wages, it is ten to one but the Irish are the first to accept his terms.

At Girvan, Maybole, &c. there are complete colonies of Irish weavers who are certainly of a lower grade and in a worse condition than the weavers living in the more inland districts of the country.

Those of the Scotch weavers who come much in contact with the Irish, are almost invariably worstened by fellowship with them. I found a great repugnance, and in some cases evident fear, on the part of Scotchmen to give any evidence to the inferior, mental and moral grade held by the Irish.

I select the following evidence to the physical condition of the weavers.

Robert Garroway, esq., surgeon, Bridgeton, Glasgow, states—"That he considers the food of weavers insufficient to sustain their strength, and is of opinion that they have not sufficient medical attendance, on account of their poverty. Believes if weavers were better paid, they would be more healthy than other trades; that they are rendered more liable to disease by their poverty, and the crowding of their dwelling-houses render fever more prevalent.

"Finds many weavers apply for parochial medical relief, and are denied, because they are not paupers; the elders have a little discretionary power to alleviate this, but not sufficient to do much good."

The Rev. *Finlay M'Allister*, Camlachie, states—"That great destitution exists among the weavers, which he attributes, not to bad morals or management, but entirely to poverty."

D. Austin, esq., surgeon, Govan, near Glasgow, states—"That, especially among the older class of weavers, they are remarkably well informed, upright and exemplary. The younger men, so far as I know; are equally proficient in their trades; but times are altered; they have little encouragement; and when seasons of depression in trade occur, their wages are so small as can scarcely keep them in the necessaries of life.

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" I believe their wages in a week, on an average, after all expenses incurred in putting up a web, are only 4*s.* to 5*s.* or so.

" The lowness of their wages, long hours of working, are sadly discouraging and detrimental to their health, and, in many instances, lead to careless habits and intemperance; they are more liable to fever than any other class, from exposure to cold and privations they endure, and I uniformly find more sickness among them when a stagnation in trade takes place.

" Their dwelling-houses are old, inconvenient and damp, more so than those who can afford to repair them, and consume more fuel.

" They ascribe their inability to remunerate my professional attendance to the rate of their wages; but scanty as their earnings are, they are always desirous to give a portion in small sums. I have been grieved of late to observe, in calling on their families, a decided decrease of the comforts they used to enjoy. I seldom now find a pot of broth boiling for their dinner, or butcher's meat used as formerly. Tea, as most readily prepared, but chiefly potatoes and herrings are almost daily taken.

" There is an alteration in younger men lately married having now no decent change of dress; they are obliged to wear on extra occasions and at church their wedding suits; and should I prescribe for complaints which require flannels, for instance, they are almost invariably destitute of that article, and have only one good shirt; and there is a lamentable want of bed-clothing.

" There are two seasons of the year in which fever prevails; about middle of November and latter end of spring, and is entirely confined among those engaged in weaving.

" They are more liable to typhus fever and other epidemics than the class of field labourers or mechanics, from exposure to cold, undue exertion, want of solid, nourishing food, and spare clothing. The privations suffered at home, engender diseases of the lungs and stomach, complaints which the nature of their employment and sedentary habits aggravate. Neither farm-servants nor other out-door labourers are nearly so liable to the influence of these diseases.

" Fever increases during bad times; and, as I have stated before, the want of wholesome food, warm clothing and fuel, originates often fevers. A weaver, with his small wages, can hardly procure all these needful articles; there is great poverty among them."

Mr. *Robert Galloway*, agent, Lanark, says—" That the weavers are in the most destitute state cannot be denied."

I need hardly remark, that the woollen weavers in Galashiels, Hawick, &c., and likewise in all the carpet factories, are wholly removed from distress; their wages are sufficient evidence of their condition, though the causes of so striking a difference will be adverted to hereafter.

The homes of the woollen weavers exhibit every symptom of comfort: removed as this class are from the demoralizing influences and the physical disadvantages of large towns, and placed almost entirely in the centre of agricultural districts, they unite the cleanliness and salubrity of the country, with the comforts of easy circumstances. Meat is almost universally a part of their diet, and their clothing is in all respects superior to that of the western weavers. They are also more moral, and avail themselves, generally speaking, of their means to educate their children.

I proceed to give a more detailed account of the chief places I visited, as regards the fabrics woven, the wages paid, the general condition of the weavers, and the causes assigned, and remedies of distress proposed. I shall afterwards resume my report of the general points of inquiry.

GLASGOW.

Glasgow is the centre of the cotton weaving trade of Scotland. It is the nucleus of a district which extends throughout the south western, and into some of the midland counties.

The following is a census of the number of the looms, fabrics, journeymen, and families, within the parliamentary boundary of Glasgow, which was collected with great care, and by personal visits to each shop and factory, by Mr. Joseph Goodsir, who was employed on the parliamentary census of Edinburgh in 1821.

ABSTRACT STATEMENT of HAND-LOOMS, with the Fabrics; Number of FAMILIES in each Shop; the Number of JOURNEYMEN employed; together with the FACTORY or DANDY-LOOMS, within the Parliamentary Districts of *Glasgow*, from a Survey under the direction of *J. C. Symons*, Esq.

Glasgow, June 1838.

DISTRICTS.	Muslins.	Pullicates, Ginghams, Stripes, &c.	Lappets and Seedings.	Thibets.	Total Plain Looms.	Shawls and Zebras.	Sprigs, &c.	Total Harness Looms.	Empty Looms.	Factory Looms.	Number of Families in each Shop.	Number of Journeymen.
Calton - - -	707	1,330	11	118	2,166	102	20	122	88	536	589	853
Bridgeton - -	861	399	17	70	1,347	186	54	240	30	100	576	493
Camlachie - -	468	166	5	14	653	50	5	55	15	- -	258	200
Parkhead and Westmuir	794	87	10	24	915	34	13	47	24	60	372	101
Gorbals - - -	158	65	37	11	271	118	50	168	36	356	243	110
Anderston - -	39	32	18	4	93	205	56	261	8	101	242	26
Havannah - -	11	91	2	3	107	13	5	18	8	95	60	43
Glenpark, Bluevale, Drygate, &c. -	236	209	3	8	456	90	36	126	36	106	288	107
Rottenrow - -	88	191	9	16	304	55	3	58	14	150	179	107
Springbank, &c. -	28	19	5	- -	52	39	7	46	6	76	69	5
TOTAL - -	3,390	2,589	117	268	6,364	892	249	1,141	265	1,580*	2,876	2,045†

* 100 of these are idle.

† Many of the Journeymen are married, and have families.

Glasgow, 29 June 1838. I hereby certify the above statement to be correct,
Joseph Goodsir.

Of the various fabrics, muslins greatly predominate.

The book-muslins are woven of equal weft with warp, and are stiffened afterwards with skill peculiar to Glasgow, in which respect no other country has yet successfully competed with them.

Mulls are the next quality woven, with one-third more weft than warp; these are not stiffened.

Jaconets or nainsooks are the next quality, and are a little thicker and stronger than the mulls.

The last description is imitation French cambrics, which are woven with one-fifth or one-sixth more weft than warp.

The above have a foreign and home consumption.

Checked and striped muslins are also manufactured to a considerable extent.

Pullicates and ginghams, from 10° to 20° reeds, both for foreign and home consumption; many of these for the West India market.

These fabrics employ the largest number of hands of any other cotton fabric throughout the whole district.

Blue and white stripes and checks, most of them for the export trade, and are manufactured by hand-loom, in consequence of the lowness of wages, but to which the power-loom would otherwise be applied.

Seedings and lappets are also woven almost exclusively for exportation; also a few lenoes, both plain and figured.

Thibets and mousseline de laine, for printed dresses, are now much woven.

Of the fabrics woven by harness, the chief are zebras, distinguished by having the warp in alternate colours; and dresses of which the warp is uniformly the same, both for gowns for the export and home trade; also sprigged muslins and a few cotton shawls.

Wages of Cotton and Thibet Weavers.

The plain muslin weavers on the best class of work, and the superior workmen, will average from 6*s.* to 8*s.* 6*d.* per week, clear of deductions. The second or inferior class, from 4*s* to 6*s.*

The pullicate, gingham, lappet, sprigged muslins and thibet weavers' average, first class from 5*s.* 6*d.* to 8*s.*; second class from 3*s.* to 5*s.* 6*d.* net.

Checks and stripes in factories average from 6*s.* 6*d.* to 9*s.* 6*d.* net; but the same work out of factory will rank with the pullicates and ginghams second class.

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Harness work, gauzes, zebras, dresses, &c., first class, 7*s.* to 10*s.* 6*d.* net; second class, 5*s.* to 7*s.* net.

Deductions.

The amount deducted from the gross wages are calculated at 1*s.* 4*d.* for the plain weavers who possess their own looms; 1*s.* 6*d.* for plain journeymen weavers who hire them; 1*s.* 7*d.* where additional mountings are required, as for lappets, and sprigged or spotted muslins; and from 3*s.* 6*d.* to 4*s.* for harness weaving.

Different rates of wages are paid by the manufacturers for the same description of work; for instance, as 13°° 9/8 lawn was paid by one manufacturer at 2 $\frac{7}{8}$ *d.* per ell, whilst the same was paid by another 2*d.* per ell, both wefted alike, and the yarn of the same number.

The finer muslins are paid up to 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ *d.* and 4 $\frac{3}{4}$ *d.* per ell.

Many of the coarser pullicates average 1 $\frac{3}{4}$ *d.*

Wages in factories average higher by at least 20 per cent., owing to the webs being ready dressed and mounted for the weavers, and owing to none but steady hands being employed.

The wives and daughters of the weavers wind the pirns, and are paid 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ *d.* to 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ *d.* per spindle, earning from 2*s.* 5*d.* to 3*s.* 6*d.* per week.

Worsted Factories.

There are two carpet hand-loom factories in Glasgow.

The Port Eglinton contains 140 looms for weaving carpets, 12 weaving rugs; and there is also another belonging to Mr. Kennedy with 30 looms.

The carpets are woven by jacquard or barrel looms, which latter form the pattern just on the same principle whereby the barrels of an organ play tunes, by lifting keys with which the warps are connected.

The webs are all estimated by porters, 13 being a fine reed for a carpet.

The webs are all one yard wide.

Twelve rug-looms are worked by boys at Port Eglinton, who first tie the worsted on to the tow warps, and then weave three shots, and tie again.

Wages of Carpet Weavers.

The wages average from 10*s.* to 12*s.* per week; no great fluctuations have occurred for 12 years.

The pieces average 94 yards, and the men are all paid per yard in the carpet trade; viz. 1*l.* 14*s.* 10*d.* for a 13 porter, when the piece is finished, 93 yards, at 4 $\frac{1}{2}$ *d.* per yard.

Condition of Carpet Weavers.

The weavers seem generally contented in the carpet trade with the wages paid them, though strikes have taken place among them occasionally.

Other Employment.

The numerous factories afford this at all wages, from 3*s.* 6*d.* to 9*s.* or 10*s.* a week, by which many, but by no means all, of the weavers' daughters and children profit.

Small Manufacturers or "Corks."

These persons infest Glasgow to a great extent, having got a very large portion of the trade into their own hands; they are distinguished from the large manufacturers by selling their goods to cash or commission houses; they manufacture generally inferior goods, but of saleable appearance, and often with stolen weft. They generally undersell the regular manufacturer in the market.

Some of these people board the weavers in their own houses, or keep stores where they must buy what they want, often at a high rate.

Some of the largest of the "corks" sell their goods to first-rate houses in the retail and wholesale country trade.

Embezzlement of weft.

The embezzlement of weft is carried on by factory girls, pirn winders, persons employed in warehouses, agents in the country, and by means of the women who sell crockery, to a great extent. There are houses in Dale-street, Bridgeton, the Salt Market, &c. where weft is received, and sold in large quantities.

The existing laws are inefficient to check this; the police are liable to prosecution when they fail to convict, and certain officers receive money to compromise charges.

General Condition.

The weavers are as badly off here as any where else; many in the Calton have no bedding to sleep on, and few, if any, have the common comforts of other artisans, living almost entirely on porridge and potatoes.

There are, of course, many of the higher paid weavers who are better off; but the majority throughout Glasgow are destitute of the comforts of life.

Morals.

Attendance on places of worship is generally fallen off, in consequence of the want of proper clothing. The morals of the younger class are greatly deteriorated,

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rated, and a very marked difference exists between them and the older generation in all points of morals. "Tramps," *i. e.* "itinerant weavers," are notoriously the worst class, and frequently steal the webs they are employed to weave. They are chiefly Irishmen.

Friendly Societies.

Friendly societies have almost entirely ceased to exist, owing to poverty. Funeral clubs are alone kept up.

Destitution and Charitable Relief.

In 1816 a relief fund was formed by subscription, which has been renewed at subsequent periods of distress, viz. 1819 and 1826.

Last year, owing to the stagnation, large numbers were supplied with relief in the shape of work and soup.

The subscriptions were commenced in May, and upwards of 5,200*l.* was collected, which, with 3,000*l.* remaining over from the former fund, placed a sum of 8,200*l.* at the disposal of the committee.

In applying the relief, it was resolved to employ the greatest possible number in widening the Clyde, and breaking stones. Webs to weave were given out only to those who were unable to work out of doors: wages, 1*s.* to 1*s.* 4*d.* per day out-door; weaving from 4*s.* to 5*s.* per week.

The following detailed statement, handed in by Mr. Baird, a gentleman distinguished for the accuracy of his statistical researches, affords valuable information as regards the weaving population of this city, and the extent of distress to which they are liable.

TABLE, showing the TRADE, AGES, CHILDREN, &c. of 3,072 of the Persons supplied with Work by the Committee on the Glasgow Relief Fund, 1837.

Place or County of Nativity.	Trade or Occupation.						Total Married.	Total Unmarried.	Total Applicants.	Ages of Applicants.				Children.			Unionists.			
	Weavers.			Other Trades.										Ages.			Ages.			
	Married.	Single.	Total.	Married.	Single.	Total.				Under 30.	30 to 50	Above 50.	Total.	Under 10.	Above 10.	Total.	Under 30.	30 to 50.	Above 50.	Total.
Glasgow	753	398	1,151	50	52	102	803	450	1,253	607	497	149	1,253	1,535	702	2,237	259	284	70	613
Other parts of Scotland	440	148	588	45	34	79	482	182	667	227	265	175	667	694	542	1,236	123	149	53	325
TOTAL, SCOTCH	1,193	546	1,739	95	86	181	1,288	632	1,920	834	762	324	1,920	2,229	1,244	3,473	382	433	123	938
Ireland	948	155	1,103	–	–	–	948	155	1,103	304	532	267	1,103	1,690	1,020	2,710	176	302	117	595
England	23	9	32	7	–	7	30	9	39	17	15	7	39	56	39	95	8	10	1	19
Abroad, &c.	7	3	10	–	–	7	–	3	10	3	6	1	10	19	3	22	–	1	–	1
GRAND TOTAL	2,171	713	2,884	102	86	188	2,273	799	3,072	1,158	1,315	599	3,072	3,994	2,306	6,302	566	746	241	1,553

(signed) *Charles R. Baird,*
Sec^y^ to the Glasgow Relief Committee, 1837-8.

Education.

Owing to poverty, the children of the weavers attend school very imperfectly, and are growing up for the most part in a state of ignorance.

Schools, nevertheless, of all descriptions abound in Glasgow, of which the prices for reading vary from 3*s.* per quarter and upwards, increasing with the number of branches taught.

In Anderston, out of 160 children under 12 and above 3 years of age, 37 are at school, 15 are educated gratis, and 123 are not receiving any education at all. The school-fees here are 2*s.* 6*d.* per quarter.

This proportion of ignorance to education will be nearly the same throughout Glasgow. Even those called educated, are very insufficiently instructed, owing to the comparatively early age at which they are withdrawn from school, and put to work.

The education of the younger adults is entirely falling off. Book Clubs and Mechanics' Institutions are but little subscribed to.

Causes and Remedies stated.

A great majority of the witnesses examined, attributed reduction of wages to competition among manufacturers as the immediate cause; for which, they required the remedy of Boards of Trade, composed equally of manufacturers and men. From this remedy, however, the more extensive body of them anticipated

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no great benefit; whilst all unanimously and urgently insist on the necessity of a repeal of the corn-laws, as the great means of relieving their condition.

Combinations among other trades, and the ease and early age at which children can make something at the loom, are the reasons why the weavers do not put their children to better trades; and which operate in increasing that excess of labour above the natural demand for it, which is the proximate cause of low wages.

Embezzlement of weft is also stated as a cause of depressing wages.

PARTICK, GOVAN AND STRATHBUNGO.

Fabrics.

Fancy goods, chiefly such as lappets, scarfs, &c. drawn from Glasgow.

Wages.

A lappet weaver averages 4*s.* 6*d.*; scarfs 5*s.* 6*d.*, and some higher.

Other Employment.

A large silk-throwing factory, Messrs. Pollock, gives employment to 300 of the inhabitants. Those engaged therein, mostly receive from 5*s.* to 9*s.* per week. Cotton mills in the neighbourhood.

Small Mafnuacturers and Agents.

There are no "small corks" in Govan, nor in Partick. Embezzlement said to be but little done.

General Condition and Morals.

The following letter comprises and corroborates the evidence taken, and contains much valuable information on the general condition of the weavers:—

"To *J. C. Symons*, Esq. Government Commissioner.

"Sir, Harmony Place, Govan, 4 May 1838.

"I have been requested, by the secretary of the weavers here, to communicate to you some information respecting the extreme depression of that once respectable, as well as ingenious, body of men.

"As an elder, and as principal manager of the poor's funds of this parish, I have had ample opportunities of becoming acquainted with their circumstances and condition; and that not only in Govan, but also in Partick and Strathbungo, both of which villages are in this parish.

"Their circumstances have, by the constantly diminishing rate of remuneration for their labour, been lamentably reduced; and I fear that, except some practicable remedy be devised, and put into immediate execution by the Legislature, their present condition, however wretched, has not reached the minimum of misery.

"They have long been without the comforts, most of them have now no adequate supply of the necessaries, of life. A large proportion of those on the poor's roll, and on all our poor's lists generally, are from the hand-loom weavers; and a still greater number of them must have been partially, and many permanently, on the parish funds, but for four Friendly and Funeral Societies, and a charitable box of the optional kind; which, though they admit members from other handicrafts, yet originated from, and are in a great degree conducted and supported by, weavers.

"The establishment and maintenance of these societies, which have been of invaluable benefit to the members, refutes the allegation, that the weavers are an unprincipled set of men, regardless of the claims of others, and reckless of the sufferings of their dependents.

"The spot whence this communication is dated, furnishes a striking illustration of the once comfortable and respectable condition of the Govan weavers. Immediately adjoining my own property here, are four snug cottages, with gardens attached, erected about 45 years ago, from the savings of four industrious well-behaved weavers. No one of the three now dead, ever did any thing to forfeit the esteem and confidence of their fellow villagers, though for many years before their death the amount of their earnings was reduced to a fourth of what it had been; and the surviving proprietor stands high as a sober and pious man.

"Had their wages remained any thing at all like what they once were, I am satisfied that the weavers would have preserved the moral and intellectual character for which they were long distinguished, but which, I grieve to add, is now sadly on the wane!

"The operative weavers are now, almost generally, without decent attire; and many of them consider their destitution, in this respect, a sufficient excuse for not attending

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attending church. And even many sincerely devout among them appear in the house of God with less and less regularity.

" This is a striking proof of marked deterioration in a Scotsman, who used to be proverbial for his indifference to strong or to nice aliment, but evinced great anxiety to possess, and did uniformly possess, suitable clothing.

" The weavers, too, have fallen lamentably off in securing a competent education to themselves and family: this I know from experience, having been 30 years a teacher.

" There is a judiciously selected library in the village; its terms are unusually moderate; but the poor weaver, though the ticket to it were presented to him gratis, has little time to spare for reading, and that little he prefers to spend in perusing the newspapers and other periodicals in search of some panacea for the accumulating calamities of his hard lot.

" It cannot be wondered at if he becomes an easy victim to the numerous and specious political quacks who are so often found enriching themselves at the expense of those who, but for the depressing effect of poverty, would have been too shrewd to suffer themselves to become the dupes of such delusion!

" People thus galled by intolerable burthens of various kinds, cannot be expected to be a very loyal body of men, since they consider the administration of the laws, if not the laws themselves, as palpably unequal. No nostrum will now avail; some easily understood and practical plan of relief to the weavers must in good earnest be set on foot, and carried gradually, but steadily forward to completion.

" To return to the subject of books and reading, and to show you that it is the debasing effect of ill requited and excessive labour that has indisposed the weavers to the improving of their minds by reading, I may mention, that there are six sabbath schools in the village, besides a class of catechumens taught by the Rev. Mr. Leishman, minister of the parish; to each of which seminaries is attached a small library, and that the books are sought with avidity, and read with interest, by the young.

" I must add, that irregularity of employment has aggravated the evils of low wages. In the village of Govan there were 35 weavers, on an average, for the four months preceding August last without webs; notwithstanding that, the Govan weavers, it is well known, from their high character, have often work when their brethren in other places are quite idle.

" Some of the neighbouring gentlemen, sympathising with their hardships, created out-door work; but this was only to a limited extent, and left those who undertook it injured for returning to their own employment, from the asperities on their hands, which do not affect the dexterity of day labourers.

" But I must now refer to the last sad result which I intend to adduce as springing directly from the long-continued depressed state of the weaving trade, the accelerated progress of the workmen, and, 'horresco referens,' of their wives, in the career of intemperance. When they have no solace elsewhere, in an evil hour, alas! they have recourse to the seductive draught, which uniformly stimulates the appetite for more, an appetite which 'grows by what it feeds on.' It is impossible for me to describe the wretchedness of their families.

" I subjoin a few figures, which will sufficiently indicate, in connexion with what I have previously stated, the downward progress of our operative weavers in 1809, when I entered on the management of the poor's funds of the parish. The statement made out by me was as follows:—

" 1809: Monthly pauper	- -	24	
Orphan	- - -	1	
		25	
1837: In-paupers	- - -		62
Orphans	- - -		11
Lunatics	- - -		8
Assisted with their rents twice a year	- -		44
			125

" In hopes that these hints may be useful to you,

" I am, sir, your most obedient servant,

(signed) *Wm Gibson*,

" Kirk Treasurer, Govan."

There is one in Govan, to which the weavers subscribe 1 *s.* entrance, and 1 *s.* 1 *d.* afterwards. Friendly Societies.

Education. There are two good schools in Govan; viz. the parochial and a subscription school; 97 children attend, the former of whom the greater part are weavers' children. Fees 2*s.* 6*d.* for reading, and 3*s.* 6*d.* for reading and writing.

One hundred and twenty-two attend the subscription school, of whom 52 are weavers' children.

There are six sbabath schools which weavers' children attend, to which libraries are attached, the children being most anxious to obtain them.

Causes and Remedies stated. The corn-laws are assigned as the great cause of distress, and their repeal is advocated unanimously. Boards of trade are also desired as a check to competition till the corn-laws are removed.

Emigration might be accepted by some, but is not generally desired.

AIRDRIE.

Fabrics. Pullicates to a considerable extent are almost exclusively woven here. Formerly much tambour-work, but little now.

Wages. Best work 6*s.* 6*d.*; coarser work 4*s.* 6*d.* net; 16^00 ell wide pullicate 3¼*d.* per ell; 10^00 47 porter pullicate 1½*d.* per ell; worked by a girl nine years old, who wove to the amount of 6*d.* per day; change of shuttle required; and working with great rapidity; she could not, however, beam or dress for herself.

Other Employment. Messrs. Houldsworth's large new cotton factory employs a number of the weavers' children at from 4*s.* 6*d.* to 9*s.*, averaging 6*s.* 9*d.* per week. Women have 1¾*d.* per spindle for fine yarn, and can wind three spindles per day. This factory has been since burnt down.

Agents and Corks. Several of the former for Glasgow houses; no small corks; agents respectable for the most part; some keep grocers' shops.

Condition. Worse off than most others, as generally appears the case in the pullicate districts.

Morals. Of elder classes good, but not so of the younger classes; many pledge their Sunday clothes for the necessaries of life.

Friendly Societies. Maintained by weavers; 4*s.* paid per year.

Education. Good schools for reading 1*s.* per month; but weaver's children attend but little; are not for a national system, and would rather have the means of educating themselves.

Causes stated. Corn-laws; restrictions on commerce; taxation; power-looms.

Remedies proposed. Repeal of corn-laws; till then a board of trade; reduction of indenture stamps; duty taken off raw cotton imported, and laid on power-loom exported goods.

HAMILTON.

Fabrics. Muslins, spots and plain muslins chiefly woven; pullicates and checks. Formerly many book muslins, but not now.

Wages. 13^00 19/16 half-cover shawl dress 6½*d.* per ell; 16 to 18 ells per week woven of this; 14^00 5/4 spot, 16 leaves, third cover, 4¾*d.* per ell; in Martinmas 1836, this was paid 7*d.*; average gross earnings 7*s.* 6*d.* per week.

Strike. In 1826, owing to a disagreement between two of the Messrs. Hutchison, brothers, a competition ensued between the two, in consequence of which, the weavers struck against Mr. Peter Hutchison, and a quantity of the work of Messrs. H. was afterwards sent to Ireland, where much of it continues to be woven at Belfast.

Other Employment. During the stagnation some hundreds were employed by the Duke of Hamilton's factor, Mr. Brown, to break metal for the roads, &c., and were paid by piece-work, tools being found them; numbers returned to the loom as soon as webs were to be procured, though at lesser wages, owing, they state, to their not being fitted for heavy work.

Many

Many agents here, which is considered by the weavers a bad system, as the agents often get wages lowered. Agents and Corks.

No embezzlement admitted to exist here by the weavers examined, to the best of their knowledge; but nevertheless I ascertained that it is done here as well as elsewhere.

Many are very comfortable here; but for the most part they are in very reduced circumstances. General Condition.

As in other places. Morals.

Private schools, but badly attended; children half educated only. Education.

Corn-laws; competition among masters; currency changed; taxation. Causes stated.

Repeal of corn-laws. Board of Trade advocated by some, but not unanimously. Remedies propose

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LANARK.

Pullicates and ginghams. The pullicates are woven in webs of 140 to 160 ells, and in reeds from 9^{co} to 18^{co}; they are subdivided into pieces, handkerchiefs, &c. Fabrics.

The ginghams are finer still, and range up to 20^{co} reeds, being exactly, except in width, what the Swiss compete with us in so successfully.

These fabrics have been woven in Lanark, and have formed its staple trade for nearly 50 years.

A few flushes are woven here also.

16^{co} ginghams, 81 porters, 20 shots, 3$\frac{1}{4}$*d.* per ell; average wages of good hands on this work will be 7*s.* gross. Deductions: starching, 2*d.*; light and coals, 2*d.*; carriage, 2$\frac{1}{2}$*d.*; loom-rent, 10*d.*; leaving 5*s.* 7$\frac{1}{2}$*d.* as the clear weekly wages for first class, but on the still finer fabrics, 7*s.* 6*d.* and 8*s.* are made. Wages.

The second, or inferior class, do not clear above 4*s.* 3*d.*; they could make something more were they to work harder. The harness weavers will earn 6*s.* 6*d.* clear.

In the cotton mills at New Lanark, some of the daughters of the weavers are employed, but no considerable portion. Other Employment.

Is done here to some extent. Mr. Galloway, a highly respectable agent, who employs nearly half the looms, says, he always finds "*that the thinnest web requires the most weft;*" there is great pith in this remark. The bowl women chiefly buy the weft. Embezzlement.

The morals of the weavers are good, on the whole, and they attend worship pretty generally. Morals.

Five hundred and sixty-six pounds eighteen shillings and eight-pence was expended last year, chiefly for the relief of the weavers who were employed in out-door work; principally in digging on the common. They could earn 10*d.* per day. They bore it well. One hundred at a time were employed thus for about 140 days. Charitable Relief.

Worse off than any other class for the most part. Condition.

Rent of houses low; setting potatoes is little practised, and not thought profitable.

A union took place here some years ago, and a table of prices was agreed to by the manufacturers, dated Dec. 2, 1833. This table was adhered to for some time, but, eventually, some of the weavers took lower wages, and the unionists, or at least a large portion of them, purchased all the revels they could get, in order to prevent any weavers from taking webs, except with their concurrence. Revels are instruments used for putting the webs into the loom. It is reported that this portion of the unionists were bound by illegal oaths. Union of Weavers.

The union was broken up last year, by an order of the Duke of Hamilton that the surplus subscription funds should be appropriated alone to those who did not belong to the union.

Many Irish are here, and several of the "tramps." Irish.

The schools here charge 3*s.* a quarter, or 1*s.* a month. Education.

Causes, and Remedies proposed. The corn-laws are assigned as the great cause of the distress of the weavers, and their repeal is unanimously demanded.

Boards of trade are also desired by a number of the weavers; but this opinion is on the decline.

STRATHAVEN.

Fabrics. Light silk gauzes are greatly woven here; several lappets and zebras also.

Work drawn from Paisley and Glasgow, through agents. Frew, and Blackburn and White send from Glasgow.

ages. Lappets chiefly woven by old men and boys; 4*s.* to 5*s.* clear, weekly.

Gauzes are paid by a table; net average perhaps 7*s.* 6*d.*, but the numerous changes attending this description of work renders it difficult to calculate them very accurately.

Twenty-four jacquard looms here.

Lappets, 11°° 68 porter 70 needles 2*d.* per ell. Gauzes 10°°, 3*d.* per ell; six ells can be woven per day. A white silk jacquard, 28°° ¼ wide, 1*s.* 1*d.* per ell; can work two ells per day. The whole mounting of this loom, and every thing included, will be 15*l.*

In 1804 a 11°° 6/4 lappet, 110 needles, was 10*d.*; in 1824, 5½*d.*
In 1824 a 11°° 6/4 lappet scarf - - - 5½*d.*; in 1837, 2¾*d.*

Other Employment. Women are employed in embroidering muslins, at from 6*d.* to 10*d.* per day. There are no factories here.

Agents and Corks. Several agents; one only who is a grocer. No "corks," nor buyers of "bowl" weft.

General Condition. Superior to that of many other places. Of the lappet weavers, several are very badly off.

Morals. Fourteen of twenty-one elders are weavers. Morals very good.

Friendly Societies. Twenty years ago there were 370 members (weavers), now only 150. Subscription 4*s.* When a member is of five years' standing, he receives 4*s.* when confined to bed, and 2*s.* 6*d.* if he can walk.

Schools. One parochial school, badly attended; fees, 2*s.* 6*d.* for reading; writing, 3*s.* 6*d.* per quarter. Three or four private schools well attended. Must not charge less than the parochial school fees.

Causes assigned. Corn-laws, and all monopolies. Excess of hands.

Remedies desired. Repeal of corn-laws; till this is done, some desire a board of trade.

PAISLEY.

Fabrics. By far the most important trade carried on in Paisley, is the manufacture of imitation shawls, which are intended to imitate the rich India shawls, held in so much value. I shall offer a description of these fabrics in some detail.

Paisley Shawls. These shawls were first attempted in Paisley, about the year 1802. One of the oldest firms in Paisley had a few making in 1803.

The manufacturer who made the first, was Mr. James Paterson; and the weaver whom he employed to work it, is said to be now unable to work, and dependent on the charity of his neighbours for support.

These shawls were, however, not thoroughly introduced here till about the year 1806, and continued to supersede the muslin trade regularly from year to year, till a great stagnation, which took place in 1818, and ruined many of the muslin manufacturers, but gave a new stimulus to the shawl trade. Under every variation of trade, shawl-making continued to increase till now, when there is hardly a web of muslin made in Paisley.

The shawls were at first made wholly of cotton, then of cotton warp and tram-silk weft; but the great peculiarity of the shawls came to be their being made of *spun silk*, which is a thread, spun in a similar manner to cotton yarn, and is made from silk waste which has been carded and otherwise prepared for being spun,

similar

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similar to cotton wool; this spun silk makes a good imitation of the real Cashmere yarn, of which the shawls brought from Cashmere are made. We can procure the real Cashmere either in wool or yarn, but the price is about four times the price of good spun silk.

These shawls are chiefly sold in London: the cotton ones only have a large American sale.

This fabric was made with filled middles and borders wrought on the shawl in the loom, and which are commonly known by the name of "*finished shawls*" at the present day, to distinguish them from such shawls as have borders sewn on. This description of shawls with scarfs and plaids (called plaids, because worn after the manner of the Scottish plaids; but they are perhaps better known in the London market by the name of long shawls) continued in vogue for some years; the scarfs and plaids taking the place of the finished shawls.

About 1815 a considerable quantity of these plaids were sold on the continent. From that period up to 1819 a great quantity of them were sold in Russia, and other places on the continent; none of them are sold there now, the duty on these goods going to Russia being about 25*s.* per pound weight.

The style and manner of finishing these goods vary with the changing fashions.

About 1817 plain middles were made entirely of spun silk, and the harness borders were sewed on; these were fashionable for a number of years, and are still made. Some of these middles are made of cotton, warp and silk weft, wrought in 14°°, 16°° and 18°° reeds.

Thibet middles are more common now, and have been for some years.

The average cost of the material and weaving, together with the average selling price of shawls, has materially fluctuated. Some houses make the shawls wholly of cotton; these shawls are from $^5/_4$ to $^7/_4$ wide, and sell from 12*s.* to 70*s.* a dozen. The greater part of manufacturers make the ground of silk, and the figuring of cotton. Shawls of this class sell from 10*s.* to 50*s.* each, according to the fineness of the fabric, and the number of colours used in making the figure.

A superior class of shawls are made of silk warp, and silk or very fine wool for weft; the weft for the figuring being fine wool for some colours, silk for other colours, and cotton for others, in the same shawl; there are but few of these made here now.

In 1806 single spun silk, No. 60, cost 27*s.* a pound; the same quality of silk is sold now at from 6*s.* to 8*s.* per pound. Double spun silk, which is two threads twisted together, used for warp, has fallen about the same rate. Cotton yarn runs from 50 to 70 per cent. lower than it was at the commencement of the shawl trade.

In 1833 the filled or finished shawls came in again, after having been out of fashion for many years; and since that time these shawls have been more varied in style, and brought to greater perfection, than ever they were at any former period, being now made of every description of pattern, costing from 3*s.* up to 12*l.*

An average plaid shawl will cost as follows; viz.

		£.	*s.*	*d.*
Warp of plaid		–	6	6
Orange silk	32 Nos, at 3½*d.*	–	9	4
Black wool	26 Nos, at 2½*d.*	–	5	5
Ruby wool	26 Nos, at 2½*d.*	–	5	5
Scarlet wool	26 Nos, at 2½*d.*	–	5	5
Green wool	26 Nos, at 2½*d.*	–	5	5
White cotton	32 Nos, at –½*d.*	–	1	4
Lavender ditto	6 Nos, at 1*d.*	–	–	6
Small shot cotton	16 Nos, at 1*d.*	–	1	4
Flower of each plaid, valued at		–	8	–
Charges to cover loss, 15 per cent. nearly		–	10	–
Weaving nine yards covering, at 2*s.*		–	18	–
Winding, about		–	2	6
		£. 3	19	2

Thibets.

Thibets were first made in Paisley about 1824; they were attempted a year or two previous to that; but Persian warp were used, and the real Thibet warp and weft were first made in 1824, and not, as erroneously stated in the statistical account

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account of Scotland, as late as 1827 or 1828, and ascribing it to a person who had nothing to do with its first introduction.

An entry exists in the warehouse-book of Messrs. J. & J. Robertson, of Thibets going in 1822.

The Thibet cloth is cut or shaved with a machine, which takes off the coarser fibres of the wool, and gives the cloth a finer and softer appearance. Singeing was first tried, but the cloth had a far harder and coarser feel after the singeing than the cutting.

Trimmings or borders are wrought for sewing on *Thibet* or *silk*, or *bastard Thibet*, so designated when the warp is cotton; an ingenious device of comparatively recent invention.

When wrought up the web, they are called "trimmings," and when wrought across the web "cross-borders;" though differently wrought in the loom, they are used for the same purpose when finished, namely, sewing on middles to make shawls.

I may here describe how the harness operates in forming the pattern on a trimming: suppose, then, that there are eight borders to be wrought in the breadth of the web, that is, what is called a two-set trimming, which trims two shawls; suppose it is a 14°° reed, which is about the coarsest; there are 14°°, 16°°, and 20°°, say 2,400 splits broad, every harness having one split, *i. e.* two threads in the mail, or small copper eye that the threads go through; then there will be 300 splits in each border (the breadth of the border standing on 300 splits); this will make what is called a 300 tie, that is, 300 cords in the simple; one harness from each of these 300 splits, equally divided off, is taken up and tied to a small cord, which comes down through the horl-box on the top of the loom; one harness from each of the eight 300 splits; of course, there are eight harnesses tied to each cord up at the box; 300 cords tied thus, will complete the tie, taking the harnesses regularly as the splits follow in the reed, and the cords as they follow regularly in the horl-box. The pattern being put on the semple (that is, the small cords that the drawboy grasps with the hand to draw up the yarn for forming the pattern on the cloth) having just the number of cords required, is tied to the small horls in the box to the neck of the harness. When the simple is tied on, and all is ready, the drawboy pulls the number of cords which the lash-twine (put on for each colour of weft in the pattern) brings out, and the weaver throws the corresponding shuttle. Hence the pattern will be formed eight times in the breadth of the web, which makes eight different borders.

This may serve to give some idea of the complexity and power of the harness, and of the inapplicability of power-looms to such fabrics. Any pattern whatever may be made by the harness-loom.

Chenille Shawls.

The first chenille shawl was produced by Alexander Buchanan, weaver, in the year 1822; the French term "chenille," signifying catterpillar, is a tolerably apt name, the colour being often finally shaded in the cloth, and having a soft, shaggy feel, and an appearance resembling, in some measure, silk velvet. This is a very peculiar fabric. The weft is woven first. The warp of the weft web is commonly put in a 12°° reed every fifth split.

The design paper on which the pattern intended to be produced is drawn, is cut upon stripes; these stripes are given to the weft-weaver, and he puts in the colours in his web with his weft, exactly as they are on the stripes. Suppose that the pattern is a border to be wrought across the web, and that it is full breadth (say 60 inches), then each stripe cut from one end of the pattern to the other, will be a shot, there being 17 shots in the whole. These are all wrought one after another on the weft web, just as they are cut out of the pattern.

The weft web is then taken and cut up between every split of warp, twined with a machine, and given to the shawl weaver, who puts the weft thus made into another web or warp, setting the colours with his fingers just as if all the stripes in the pattern were cut separately, and attached to each other at the ends to form a continued thread; by turning each piece at the ends or selvage into their former juxta position, you would form the pattern again just as it stood at first.

The weft must be a kind of gauze ground, otherwise, when cut up between the splits, the colours would drop out.

The shawl is wrought a gauze ground also, generally in a 12°° reed, every third split; the warp of the shawl is not observed in the cloth; it is the shaggy

appearance

appearance of the weft in which the beauty consists. When made of soft silk, it is a beautiful article, but it is now greatly deteriorated, being made of spun silk, mixed with cotton, which detracts from its glossy, soft and velvet appearance.

This fabric is mostly exported at the present time to America.

The manufacturers now making these shawls, are Messrs. Kerr, Baird & Wallace, Bisset, Mason, Munn, Guthrie, James Porter, jun., Thomson, Taylor, &c.

A few years ago Mr. Taylor sold some that he made of soft silk as high as 5*l.* each. Those made of spun silk sell now at from 12*s.* to 30*s.*, according to quality. There is a cheaper kind still made, principally of cotton, which do not look well.

Angolas were introduced in 1821; they are a kind of damask, wrought with coarse wefts, and cut, which gives it a rough, shaggy appearance. A little of these are still made here.

In 1823 Mr. James White introduced *Canton crapes*, both plain and damask: these are all heavy silk.

Mr. White had some little difficulty at first in finding out the method of craping or crimping the cloth; this is effected by working with two shuttles, each with weft doubled and twined contrary the one to the other, and wrought two shots about; and when out of the loom, the cloth is boiled, which causes the weft which is twined differently to give the cloth a fine curled crimped appearance. A considerable quantity of this fabric is still made, principally by Messrs. White, Holmes, Blair and Gibson; Barton, Greenlees, Keith, &c.

They are both consumed at home and exported.

Quakers are spun silk shawls wrought in 14°°, 16°° and 18°° reeds, twilled, with fringes at the sides and ends of the squares, and worn in this plain state; hence their name, having been principally worn by Quakers for a considerable time after their introduction in 1827. Many of them are now beautifully embroidered with silk of various colours round the sides and in the corners.

A considerable quantity of this fabric is exported to America.

Chief manufacturers, Messrs. Young, Lang, Holmes, Ingram, Munn, &c.

A house of long standing in the trade paid for 16°° harness plaids,—

In 1814	at the rate of	3/9	per 5,000 shots.
1818, 19		2/2	
1822		2/8	
1824, 5		2/10	
1827		1/2½	
1829		1/3½	
1833		1/4	
1838		1/4	

The year 1819 was a dull period, as also 1826, and the beginning of 1827, as well as 1829 and 1837, which was the most severely felt in Paisley of any of these periods.

From 1833 till the end of 1836 trade was good, and weavers in constant employment.

It is calculated that in 1835 the value of goods manufactured by Paisley houses was upwards of one million sterling.

About the year 1760 the making of silk gauze was first commenced in Paisley, in imitation of that of Spitalfields in London. Mr. Humphrey Fulton, silk manufacturer, Maxwelltown, Paisley, is said to have been the first who commenced this manufacture in Scotland. Companies came from London to carry it on in Paisley, and it soon became the staple trade of the town.

In 1784 about 5,000 looms were employed chiefly at this work in the town and west country villages.

In that year the manufacture of silk gauze lawn, and linen gauze, and white sewing thread, amounted to the value of £.579,185. 16*s.* 6*d.*

In 1760 the whole of the manufacture amounted to only £.15,000.

Many beautiful fancy articles are produced in this line. There are lappets, as well as various descriptions of goods figured with the harness. These are used for veils, handkerchiefs, dresses, ladies head-dresses, &c., and sold in the London market.

These goods are now chiefly manufactured by Messrs. Fulton & Son; W. Carlisle & Co.; James White, junior; Coats, Greive & Co.; Alexander Keith, &c.

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There are commonly about 550 weavers in town, and about as many in the country employed by these houses.

This branch of manufacture gradually declined as the muslin manufacture was introduced; however, it seems to have maintained its present standing, with little variation, for some years.

Zebras: there were more of these striped dresses made here once than at the present time. The only manufacturers who make them now are Messrs. Farquharson, Merrylees and Cook.

Rove shawls, allovers, jaconet borders, jaconet sprigs, &c. These are all a similar description of work, being a kind of jaconet ground, the rove shawls being the heaviest. They are all figured with the harness.

The *rove shawls* are figured something after the manner of shawls, with borders, &c., the weft for figuring being coarse cotton, unbleached or half bleached, called rove.

The *all-overs* get this name from being also figured all over the web; the flowering weft is the same as the former. These are used for bed-curtains, &c.

Jaconet borders are figured at one side of the web only.

Jaconet sprigs are sprigged all over the web, a piece being wrought plain, and then a sprig. Used for gowns, &c.

These fabrics are mostly all exported and sold at Leipsic and other places.

Veined stripes: there is still a little of this fabric made in Paisley.

Lappets: a considerable quantity was made in Paisley about 1812 to 1814, and previous to these periods; but there are only two manufacturers making it now; a good deal of it is still made in Glasgow. Weavers earn lower wages at this, and the preceding fabric, than most of the Paisley fabrics, with the exception of the following:—

Foundations are what may be called the coarsest kind of jaconets, wrought in 4°° and 6°° reeds, wefted generally even.

This fabric, after being stiffened with starch, is used for lining the sleeves and skirts of gowns, and some of it is exported.

There are employed at this work in Paisley, not above 150 persons, mostly old men and boys.

Buckrams are commonly wrought in 4°° reeds, made of heavy yarn, some of them linen warp and cotton weft, others cotton warp and linen weft, and some all cotton. This fabric is stiffened with starch, and used for putting in the crowns of ladies bonnets, and various other purposes. Some of it is also exported.

About 200 persons employed at this work in Paisley. The manufacturers who make it are Messrs. Polson, Brown, Johnston, and Lymington.

Wages.

The weavers of the first class of figured shawls and plaid shawls will average from ten to thirteen shillings per week, clear of all deductions, which are estimated at from five to six shillings and sixpence per week, and inclusive of the loss of time occasioned by the fresh mountings required whenever a new pattern is given out. The tying of the smaller strings which constitute the upper part of this mounting, and on which the pattern depends, is provided by the manufacturer. Nevertheless, the weaver suffers considerable expense and loss of time by adopting the lower mountings of his loom to the new ties This change occurs sometimes three times a year, but generally about twice in fourteen or fifteen months. The most ephemeral patterns are however paid the highest. About 300 weavers only were in June 1838 earning above twelve shillings per week clear.

The second class of weaving consisting of light fancy or figured silks, &c. affords an average of about 10*s.* 4*d.* per week, clear of deductions.

The third class of work, namely, the shawls with cotton warp of all the various varieties, together with rove shawls, zebras, dresses, sprigs, &c. (all harness work), will average from six to nine shillings per week clear, comprising the majority of the Paisley weavers.

The fourth class may be made to comprise the great bulk of the *plain* weaving, viz., thibets, middles of shawls, quakers, and other plain silks, will average from seven to nine shillings per week clear.

The fifth class of work comprising lappets and the coarser fabrics, will give an average of from four shillings and sixpence, to six shillings and sixpence per week, clear wages.

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Fluctuation in Wages.

Mr. Yuil, an extensive and experienced manufacturer, says, "The figured, or, as they are called in the trade, the filled shawls, are made on a cheaper method than they were till within these ten years; the ground is still kept fine, but the figuring is only half the fineness of the ground; on that account the weft for the figuring is now from 14 to 24 hanks in the pound; formerly it was used from No. 36 to No. 50; and the weaving of a shawl is much less now, even at the same price per ell, than it was formerly, for the weaver is paid by the number of *shots* he throws across the web, 5,000 of these being called an ell; formerly there might be from eight to ten ells weaving in a shawl; now a good shawl runs from four to six ells. The weaving will in general be from one-fourth to one-half the cost of the shawl. A good filled shawl sold in 1822 at about 60*s.*; now one equally good will be sold at 25*s.*; that is the price got by the manufacturer.

"The cost of weaving when a branch of trade commences, is always high to what it becomes afterwards; but the workman's wages is not at all in proportion to the price paid for weaving; for, besides the various improvements made, the weaver acquires a facility which no one had at the introduction of the work; what was paid in 1814, 3*s.* 9*d.*, was in 1822, 2*s.* 8*d.*, and is now paid 1*s.* 4*d.* A good weaver working at shawls in 1814, could make 25*s.* to 30*s.* a week clear, and at the present day 15*s.* to 20*s.* per week clear. In both cases the better class of work is understood, and the casualties of dull trade not counted on.

"The fluctuations which have attended the sale of shawls cannot be easily described; a change takes place in the character of the pattern twice a year, for the spring and autumn sales; at the end of the season the goods generally fall to cost prices, and very often below that; besides which, there is a sort of revolution in taste takes place every two or three years. At one time shawls figured in the loom are the things wanted; these are modified to suit the different seasons, till the public gets tired of them; they are then succeeded by plain shawls made of fine spun silk cloth, or fine merino cloth, with borders sewed on.

"Take the last ten years, for example. In 1829, the introduction of a new and very peculiar style of border gave an impulse to the trade, which was then recovering from a very great stagnation. The taste for plain shawls continued under various modifications till 1833, when the introduction of rich figured French shawls made a complete change in the trade; filled shawls were mostly wanted till 1837, when plain shawls began to be inquired after, and the dulness complained of by the weavers this summer, arose in a great measure from plain shawls being principally wanted; for filled shawls employ perhaps six times the number of weavers to produce an equal number of shawls, which plain ones do; and our weavers were the worse off on account of the cloth for the middles being merino cloth brought from France, or Yorkshire, and the borders Gimp ribbons, made in Coventry."*

The following is a Table of the gross average wages of the weavers in the employ of Messrs. J. & J. Robertson, manufacturers of the first class of Paisley shawls from the year 1810 to 1838, given under the signature of Mr. Robertson; 6*s.* 6*d.* per week to be deducted for draw-boy, and other necessary outlay.

1810 to 1816 - - 33/	1826 * - - - 16/	1833 - - - 20/
1817 to 1820 - - 24/	1827 * - - - 16/	1834 - - - 22/
1821 - - - - 30/	1828 - - - - 17/	1835 - - - 22/
1822 - - - - 30/	1829 - - - - 18/	1836 - - - 19/8 ¼
1823 - - - - 30/	1830 - - - - 19/	1837 * - - - 19/8 ½
1824 - - - - 31/	1831 - - - - 19/	1838 * - - - 19/8 ½
1825 - - - - 31/	1832 - - - - 20/	

The years marked thus * were dull years.

The

* I have to acknowledge my obligation to William Yuil, esq. manufacturer, and to Mr. John Wood, the intelligent secretary of the weavers at Paisley, for much of the above information as to the interesting and peculiar fabrics of this town.

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The following is a similar Table from Messrs. William Carlile & Co., manufacturers of second class shawls:—

	Figured.	Plain.		Figured.	Plain.
1817 to 1820	26/	15/6	1827	22/	13/6
1821	26/	15/6	1828	22/	12/
1822	26/	15/6	1829	22/	12/
1823	24/6	15/	1830	21/6	9/6
1824	24/6	15/	1831	18/	8/
1825	24/6	15/	1832 to 1838	15/ to 18/	8/ to 9/
1826	22/	13/6			

5*s.* may be deducted for the harness weavers' expenses, and 2*s.* for the plain weaver per week.

Stagnations of Trade.

The Paisley weavers are exceedingly liable to these: on the 11th May 1838 there were 756 looms idle, and 170 "flower-lashers."

Minimum Table of Prices.

A minimum Table of Prices has been long established in Paisley; that fo the shawls was agreed to by manufacturers and weavers in December 1834. The following are extracts of the rates agreed on:—

Plain middles	14°° reed	15 shots	1,400 warp,	2*d.*	
„	18°° „	17 „	2,000 „	3 4/5 *d.*	
Quakers	14°°, 16°° and 18°°	16 „	1,200 „	1 4/5 *d.*	
„	„ reed	„ „	2,400 „	4*d.*	
Thibets	8°° „	12 „	1,400 „	4*d.*	
„	10°° „	16 „	2,100 „	8*d.*	
Finished shawls and bandeaus	14°° reed	1,704 to 1,867 warp	400 tye,	14*d.*	
„	„ „	1,867 to 2,030 „	600 „	16 1/2 *d.*	
Ditto	20°° „	2,406 to 2,649 „	520 „	16 1/2 *d.*	
Ditto	„ „	2,892 to 3,135 „	820 „	23 1/2 *d.*	

The Table for Silk Gauzes was agreed to on the 1st May 1835. The following are Extracts from the Scale of Prices:—

Reed.	Description.	Number of Splits to be occupied, either with Soft or Hard Silk, exclusive of Lizurs.						
		700.	800.	900.	1,000.	1	1,200	1,300
		d.	*d.*	*d.*	*d.*	*d.*	*d.*	*d.*
10°°	Cypress, per yard	- -	- -	2	2			
14°°	- - ditto - - - - -	- -	- -	- -	- -	- -	- -	3
12°°	Gossamer, Hard Silk Warp, Soft Silk Shute	- -	- -	3 3/4	4	4 1/2	5	5 1/2
14°°	Soft Silk Handkerchiefs	- -	- -	- -	8 1/4	9	9 3/4	10 1/4
18°°	- ditto - ditto	- -	- -	- -	- -	- -	- -	10 3/4
10°°	Harness Figure, one-fourth Cover	3 3/4	4 1/4	4 1/2	5	5 1/2	5 3/4	6 1/2
10°°	- ditto - ditto - all-over	9 1/4	9 1/2	10	10 1/2	11 1/4	12	12 3/4
10°°	All-over Figured Scarfs	9 1/4	9 1/2	10	10 1/2	11 1/4	12	12 3/4

These Tables have, for the most part, been subject to a few variations only, being generally adhered to by both parties.

A more friendly understanding has subsisted between the employer and the employed in Paisley than in most other places.

The above Table has been often exceeded.

Other Employment.

During stagnations the weavers get employment in out-door labour on the banks of the river, breaking stones, &c.; about 600 so employed in 1837. The women and children are employed in warehouses and thread factories; the former, making from 6*s.* to 8*s.* per week; the latter, 3*s.* to 4*s.*: boys are generally employed in drawing.

Agents and Corks.

There are many "corks" here; the number of looms employed by them vary according to the state of trade; 10 or 12 being the greatest number so employed by one individual.

The

The goods which these men produce, are stated by some of the weavers to be as good, and by others inferior to the regular manufacturers, while the wages they pay also vary. Most of the manufacturers here have risen from this class. South of Scotland. Report from *J. C. Symons*, Esq.

Embezzlement of yarns is stated not to be done to any great extent in Paisley, the nature of the work rendering it of very easy detection ; there are, however, houses who purchase it, and afterwards retail it to manufacturers. Embezzlement.

The general condition of the weavers in Paisley is better than those of Glasgow : the particular branch of trade in which they are engaged prevents a great influx of hands, and thereby the wages are a little higher, their children also being better employed. General Condition.

The morals of the weavers are said to be equal with those of any other class ; they attend church less than formerly, being often prevented by want of clothing. Morals.

It was also stated that the tenets of Mr. Owen have gained several converts in Paisley, and that, in consequence, many stay away from church "*on principle.*"

There is a Funeral Society, nearly 1,000 members males and females ; entry for a young man, rising in proportion to age. Friendly Societies.

There is also a Friendly Society : a man entering at 30 years of age, pays 16*s.*, which is increased when the applicant for admission is older : when the members are confined to bed, 10*s.* per week is paid ; if unable to work, but not confined to bed, 6*s.* per week.

There are plenty of good schools in Paisley ; fees 4*s.* per quarter for reading ; but the weavers being obliged to put their children to work at any early age, prevents their getting education ; most of the children, however, can read, but very few can write or cipher. Education.

The corn-laws, and other restrictive duties, are said to be the chief causes of the depressed state of the weaving body in Paisley, together with competition and excess of hands. Causes.

A majority of the weavers in Paisley are in favour of a board of trade, which they think would have the effect of preventing wages from falling, but would not raise them, and admit that they might be evaded : they are unanimous in a repeal of the corn-laws and all restrictive duties on commerce ; they wish the duty on the indenture stamps reduced to 1*s.*, and the standard for silk and cotton equalized, the same as the linen. Remedies.

PORT GLASGOW AND GREENOCK.

Sail-cloths are almost exclusively woven here ; the Gourack Rope Company employs 300 looms in a factory at Port Glasgow. Fabrics.

There is a sail-cloth factory at Greenock also belonging to Messrs. Muir & Martin, employing 60 looms, of which two are domestic.

Sail-cloths are divided into five qualities, of which the first is woven of flax warp and weft, and is highly bleached ; the second is the same, but less bleached ; the third is coarser, and with flax warp and tow weft ; the fourth is the same, but less bleached ; the fifth is of tow, both warp and weft.

There are, moreover, seven subdivisions of each, varying according to the quality of the yarn.

These vary from 10*s.* to 15*s.* per week. Wages.

The first quality, No. 1. (subdivision,) 24 porter reed, is paid 6*s.* 2*d.* per piece of 40 ells ; deduction for winding, 5*d.* each piece ; a good weaver weaves $2\frac{1}{2}$ pieces per week.

The factory hours are from six morning to half past seven evening, and the weavers take what time they chuse for meals.

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Average Selling Prices of Goods.

The weavers say they have nothing to complain of.

1st quality	- - -	16*d.* per yard, falling $\frac{1}{2}d.$	on each subdivision.
2d - ditto	- - -	15*d.* - -	ditto - - - ditto
3d - ditto	- - -	14*d.* - -	ditto - - - ditto
4th ditto	- - -	13*d.* - -	ditto - - - ditto
5th ditto	- - -	9*d.* - -	ditto - - - ditto

Morals.

The morals of the weavers here, are fully equal to that of any other class.

CARPET MANUFACTURE, KILMARNOCK.

The carpet trade here appears highly flourishing, and is carried on exclusively in factories by manufacturers who card, spin, dye and weave their own wool.

There are three chief classes of carpets manufactured here, all woven with harness.

1st. Scotch Carpets.—These are woven in pieces 98 yards in length, and one yard in width. They are of the three following qualities: 1st, the commonest, 9 porters, paid $2\frac{1}{2}d.$ per yard for weaving; the 2d, or middle quality, $10\frac{1}{2}$ porter, is paid $3\frac{1}{2}d.$ per ell; the superfine, $13\frac{1}{2}$ porter, $4\frac{1}{2}d.$ per yard. A good weaver would finish one piece in two and a half weeks; that is, 39 yards per week.

The selling price to the wholesale merchant of these carpets, $13\frac{1}{2}$ porter, is 2*s.* 10*d.* per yard, reduction 4*d.* or 5*d.* having taken place within three or four years.

2d. Brussels Carpets.—These are of two descriptions; those called *points* have the same pattern on each side of the carpet, and therefore require less labour and half the monting. They are paid 9*d.* per yard, being all woven only three quarters of a yard wide.

The *combers* have a varied pattern throughout the whole width of the web, and are paid 10*d.* per yard on account of the increased labour required. The ribbed appearance in a Brussels carpet is produced by the insertion of long brass wires between the shots of the woollen web, so as to raise the warps, the wires being drawn out afterwards in succession. The warps are extended a great length from the loom, to the ends of which are attached small leaden weights, after having passed round the bobbins.

The sale price to a wholesale merchant of a Brussels carpet, which are all superfine, is 4*s.* 3*d.* per yard.

3d. Wilton Carpets, with which Buckingham palace was furnished, are woven exactly like the Brussels carpets, except that the brass wires are groved, and the rib is cut open with a sharp knife after it has been fastened, which gives the carpet a more rich and velvet appearance.

These carpets are woven 36 yards in length, and are 16 porters, and paid 1*s.* 4*d.* per yard for weaving.

Another very beautiful fabric, called Persians, woven here for fire-screens, the weft being tied into perpendicuar warps by the hand, after the manner of making rugs. The designs are beautifully executed from patterns procured from Berlin, prepared there for ladies' work, and which are found well adapted to this fabric, and better executed than can be got in this country. The Persians are paid $\frac{3}{4}d.$ the inch for weaving.

Rugs are also made here.

Wages of Carpet Weavers.

Wages of the carpet and rug weavers run from 12*s.* to 14*s.* per week net, and occasionally higher.

IRVINE.

Fabrics.

Book muslins, jaconets and checks.

Wages.

Average gross wages 8*s.* 6*d.*, deductions 1*s.* 6*d.*, clear wages 7*s.* per week.

15° $^{11}/_{8}$ book muslins, No. 220, $6\frac{1}{4}d.$ per ell; 4 ells of this may be worked per day of 14 hours.

This

This is the best work in Irvine, 10°° 4/4 jaconet 1¼ *d.* per ell, 2 shuttled and checked: eight ells of this may be worked per day. This work is paid half a set lower than in Glasgow, in consequence of the agency. South of Scotland. Report from *J. C. Symons*, Esq.

Females are employed in sewing muslins, the price of which varies, with the fashion of the goods, from 6*d.* to 1*s.* 3*d.* per day. The approaching coronation, for instance, has given an increased demand. Work plentiful in winter, but scarce in autumn. Other Employment.

The agents here have given no cause for complaint. No small corks. Agents and Corks.

Embezzlement to a small extent; one case only has been brought before the magistrates in four years.

Weavers on a par with shoe-makers and labourers. A reduction of about 7*s.* 6*d.* per month taken off the wages of seamen, in consequence of the lowness of coals in Ireland. General Condition.

Aid to the extent of 1,200*l.* was given during the stagnation of 1837 in work by weaving, &c.

On a par with others. Morals.

Good schools. An excellent academy here of 400 scholars. Subscription school fees, 2*s.* for reading; 2*s.* 6*d.* for reading, writing and arithmetic; about 200 attend this school. A commercial school; 2*s.* for reading, 2*s.* 3*d.* writing, 2*s.* 6*d.* for arithmetic to subscribers only. Education.

The corn-laws assigned as the chief cause; also competition among manufacturers being alleged. The great competition began between Messrs. Preston & Hutchison, which particularly affected this place in 1826. When it is stated that a 14⁵⁰ 11/8 lawn was reduced from 7½*d.* to 3½*d.* per ell, it is probable that wages were not reduced to this extent.—[*See* Evidence of Mr. Graham Hutchison.] Causes.

It was all but admitted by the weavers, that the statement made by Mr. Graham Hutchison was correct, viz.—that wages were in 1824-5, almost as low as they were reduced to by the above-named competition, but that they were raised to the high rate by the union among the weavers themselves.

The strike which took place against Mr. Peter Hutchison at the time he was competing with his brother, induced the Messrs. Hutchison to remove a great portion of their work to Belfast, where it has remained ever since.

Repeal of the corn-laws is desired, and until that is granted, the weavers require a board of trade. Remedy.

MAYBOLE.

Muslins (mulls and jaconets), pullicates, and imitation thibets. A few coarse woollens and blankets. Fabrics.

Gross average about 6*s.* per week: 20°° 1/8 jaconet, 6 shots over; this will average 8*s.* per week gross: 12°° 9/8 jaconet, 70 porters, 46 split warp, 50 split weft, No. 1, ⅝*d.* per ell, William Meikle & Co.: 14°° 15/16 cossacs, 160 ells, 65 porter, 1½*d.* per ell, Stewart M'Aulay: 12°° solid pullicate, 148 ells, 1,150 splits, 1¾*d.* per ell weaving, 1½*d.* winding weft: 10°° 3/4 thibet, 39 porters, 1¾*d.* per ell. Name of manufacturer cut out. Wages.

Sewing tippets or collars 3*s.* 6*d.* per week average. Other Employment.

The agents here appear to be of the worst possible character; charges made against them on oath were, first, that they keep shops where spirits and all sorts of goods are sold at above the usual prices, and that although no stipulation is made by them, those weavers who do not choose to take their goods in payment, receive no fresh work from them; 2d, that they rent houses, and re-let them to the weavers in the same manner; and, 3d, that they compel some of the weavers to purchase reeds of them; and, 4th, they give the weavers less weft than they receive from the manufacturers, fining them, and either selling the weft, or manufacturing it themselves; 5th, that they charge 1*s.* 6*d.*, and sometimes more, being from 3*d.* to 6*d.* more on the carriage of each web than what they pay. Agents, Corks and Embezzlement.

Agents tear off the manufacturer's name from the ticket.

Embezzlement of weft carried on here to a great extent by the weavers and pirn winders, who sell it chiefly, and almost openly, to brokers in the town. The

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weavers frequently pawn their clothes to buy weft enough to finish their webs. The procurator fiscal believes the value of weft annually stolen in these parishes amounts to 1,300*l.* per year, and that warp is sent by "small corks" at Glasgow to certain weavers at Maybole, to be wefted there with "bowl" weft; so called because women who sell bowls were employed to buy it.

Weavers occasionally take a part of the warp from the chain, but this is done seldom.

The evidence of the seller has been taken here against the buyer; but this is scarcely admissible by law.

General Condition. The weavers here are badly off, though the shoemakers at present are in a bad condition, there being "small corks" also in their trade.

Morals. Apparently very low.

Remedy. Gradual repeal of the corn-laws unanimously desired, a reduction of taxation, and some prevention of the evils of agency.

Are against a board of trade.

SANQUHAR AND VICINITY.

Fabrics. There is a carpet factory. Wages and fabrics the same as at Kilmarnock. Ginghams, thibets and tartans are also woven here.

Wages. Thibets will average 6*s.* 6*d.*, tartans 5*s.* 3*d.*, and ginghams 4*s.* 6*d.* per week clear: 10 $^{3}/_{4}$ ginghams, 1 $^{3}/_{8}$ per ell, 16°° thibet.

Agents. No complaint against these here.

Education. A parochial subscription and new school, 3*s.* per quarter, reading and writing.

Condition. Scarcely so bad as common labourers, having facilities for other employment; and out-door work occasionally from the Duke of Buccleuch.

Cause and Remedy, &c. The corn-laws, and their repeal. A board of trade is also desired by a majority of the weavers here.

A national system of education, not quite free of payment, is earnestly wished.

DUMFRIES.

Fabrics. The only fabrics woven here are ginghams of the coarsest description, such as are used for aprons, sent from Carlisle by Messrs. Ferguson & Dicksons, two chief manufacturers, called campers, ginghams, umbrellas, cross-overs, &c.

Wages. The average clear earnings 4*s.* to 5*s.* per week. The weavers have to pay the winding of the weft, 2*d.* per 1*s.* on what they earn.

10°° 51 porter	- - -	3 cuts 7*s.* per cut.
10°° 43 porter	- - -	3 cuts 6*s.* 6*d.* per cut of 60 yards.
10°° 76 porter	- - -	8*s.* 6*d.* per cut double web.

10 yards of the above may be wove in 12 hours.

The fabrics here are paid by the cut of 60 yards, and not by the ell, as at Glasgow. A cut being the average work of a week, 1*s.* is paid conditionally on the work being approved, per cut, which is arbitrary with the master.

Other Employ. The females are employed in hand-sewing muslin collars, and seaming stockings, considerable quantities of the latter being made in Dumfries. They will earn 2*s.* a week only at this work.

Agents. The agents act fairly here. Embezzlement to some extent. "Small corks" manufacture it.

General Condition. The weavers very badly off, worse than any other class; one-third are Irish.

Three hundred pounds were distributed in aid generally during the last frost. The weavers here did not feel the late stagnation severely.

Friendly Societies. The weavers unable to keep these up.

Good

Good schools. A subscription school 1*d.* per week; weavers generally send their children here. Others, at which 2*s.* 6*d.* per quarter is charged for reading, writing and arithmetic. Education.

The corn-laws, which tend to restrict the commerce of the country; their repeal is unanimously desired by the weavers, and a reduction on indenture stamps. Boards of trade are not desired by the weavers here. Causes and Remedies.

ANNAN.

The same as at Dumfries, viz. coarse ginghams drawn exclusively from Carlisle; ginghams for umbrellas are also woven here. Fabrics.

The weavers state 4*s.* 6*d.* as the highest average that can be fairly struck, which is very little, if at all, at variance with the truth. Wages.

The provost says, that 35 years ago the weavers might have made 35*s.* per week, but seldom did actually make above 10*s.*, they were so drunken.

Wages have greatly declined for the last two years. In 1838 a 10^{00} "cross-over" gingham, 50$^1/_2$ porters, 36 inches, is paid 22*s.* 6*d.* per web of 3 cuts, or 180 yards. Whilst in 1836 a 10^{00} "cross-over" of 46 porters only, and 33 inches, was paid according to the table, 26*s.* 3*d.*

The average amount woven per week will not exceed one cut, or 60 yards, which will be paid 6*s.* 6*d.*, with 1*s.* extra if approved, making 7*s.* 6*d.*, out of which, the weaver has to pay 2*d.* per shilling for winding, and at least 1s. for loom-rent, wear and tear, fire and lights, &c., leaving 5*s.* 3*d.* clear, which is decidedly above the average, requiring at least 11 hours' work per day.

This was done to enable the manufacturers to fine the webs, without risk of adjudication against them by the magistrates, which had gone against them previously. Extra Shilling, if approved, on the Carlisle Tickets.

The women will earn about 1*s.* 6*d.* and 2*s.* for winding. Besides this, there are large cotton-mills and rope-works; and a very strong desire exists among the weavers to get their children off the loom, which many are enabled to accomplish. Weaving is consequently decidedly on the decrease here. Other Employ.

Those with young families are lamentably ill off. Condition.

They get land lent them for manure here to set potatoes. The terms are, for carting the manure *one* day's sheep-shearing for two cart carriages. Two carts of manure will suffice for 80 yards length, 1 yard wide.

The provost here, who is a farmer, thinks this system but little advantageous to the weavers.

The weavers are able only to educate about one-third of their children. Education.

A parochial school, charging 2*d.* per week in advance, for reading only.

Several good private schools, 3*d.* per week for reading.

The corn-laws, and their repeal; against boards of trade and emigration. Causes assigned, and Remedy desired.

N. B.—Wages slightly rose in the Carlisle articles soon after the above inquiries were made.

HAWICK.

Hawick and the district of Selkirkshire, of which it is, with Galashiels, the chief, are engaged almost exclusively in the *woollen fabrics*. Fabrics.

At Hawick the fabrics consist of, 1st. Checked woollens for trowsers. 2d. Ditto for shepherd's plaids, generally worn here as cloaks. 3d. Ditto for women's shawls with fringe, coarse and large check pattern. 4. A fine Tartan. 5. Coarse Scotch blankets, of which many are woven by power. 6. Coarse white plaiding for drawers. 7. Druggets.

The above are all estimated as to fineness of the reed by *porters*, there being 4 to the split, except when stated otherwise, so that a 16 porter will be equivalent to a 32 porter at Kilmarnock, or to a 6 reed in the cottons.

This trade is greatly extending at Hawick; several factories are erected, and some of them work a great portion of the night through. Nearly all the hand-looms

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looms are in factories; there are also several power-looms for blanket and white plaiding weaving. The Messrs. Wilson, and Messrs. Dickson & Laing, are the principal manufacturers. Lord Minto obtains a good deal of work for the Hawick manufactories, and the Admiralty employs them for the shirts, &c., of a portion of the navy.

Average Prices at which the Goods are sold.

Shepherd's plaids, 16 porters, $^6/_4$ (usual reed), $2\frac{3}{4}$ yards long, 9*s.* 6*d.* per plaid. [To the retail shops for 12*s.*]

Do. fine, 25 porter, $^6/_4$ (*foreign wool*), 3 yards long, 18*s.* per plaid.

Tartan (Argyle) 18 porter, $^6/_4$ per piece of 34 yards, 6*l.* 16*s.*, or 4*s.* per yard.

Checked shawls, 16 porters, $^8/_4$ square, 8*s.* 9*d.*; the prices vary greatly, down to as low as 2*s.* 3*d.* for a $^4/_4$.

Blankets, 9 porters, $^7/_4$ by $^9/_4$ 8*s.*, $^8/_4$ by $^9/_4$ 9*s.*

Wages.

Wages average as high here as in any part of Scotland, except Galashiels.

Shepherds' plaids, 16 porters, $^6/_4$ wide, 28 ells in the dozen, paid 11*s.* $8\frac{1}{2}$*d.* Deduction 1*s.* per dozen for winding, and 3*d.* per week for light.

Quantity woven averages by good weavers 18*s.* per week; giving average clear wages 15*s.* per week. Inferior weavers average 10*s.*

Tartans, $16\,^1/_2$, 6*d.* per ell; many average *clear* for best weavers, 18*s.* per week. Winding paid by weavers here 5*s.* 8 *d.* per hank; 2 *s.* as above. Blankets paid at 8 *s.* for nine pair; money average 14 *s.* per week for first class, and 9 *s.* 6 *d.* for second class weavers.

Deductions.

N. B.—The winding of the weft for the blankets only is done ready for the weaver here in the mill; he pays only for winding the *blue* weft about 1 *d.* per week. Three-pence per week through the year is deducted also for *light*.

Condition.

As good, if not better than other classes. Meat constantly for dinner, &c. &c.

Education.

General and good; pay 2 *s.* 6 *d.* for reading, and 3*s.* 6 *d.* reading, writing and arithmetic, at the parochial school.

Remedies.

Repeal of the corn-laws strongly desired. Boards of trade opposed.

JEDBURGH.

Fabrics.

The same as at Hawick, with a few linen looms.

Average Wages for good Workmen when fully employed.

Wages.

	(4 to Split) Porters.	Cut Yarns.	Width.	Pay.	Quantity.	Net Wage per Week.
1. Trowser checks -	16	19	$\frac{8}{4}$	22/	34 ells	12/
2. Shawls - - -	16	23	$\frac{8}{4}$ sq.	10/ p'doz.	- - -	16/
3. Plaiding - -	12	20	$\frac{9}{4}$	15/8	64 ells	12/
4. Shepherd's plaids -	17	20	$\frac{8}{4}$	17/	54 ells	13/
5. Blankets - -	12	16	$\frac{9}{4}$	18/	18 pair / 66 ells	10/6
6. Linen - - -	Porter. Reed. 42 = 8^{50}	- - -	- - -	10/	60 yards	8/7

Average 12/8 $\frac{5}{8}$

N. B.—11 hours and a half per day allowed for average work-time.—[*See* Mr. Ewing's statement.]

There are three factories here: 1. Messrs. Hillson's; 2. Mr. Rutherford's; 3. Mr. Ewing's, who is building a large mill. A little of the weaving is by power. Water-power exclusively used here.

The weavers here are very liable to short time, from slackness of trade.

Deductions.

The winding here is charged to the weaver, except for the linens. The woollen weavers pay 1 *d.* in the shilling on their earnings for all the coarse weft; the tartan weft being paid for at *one-tenth* of the earnings, instead of *one-twelfth*; these have been duly deducted in the above statements of *net* wages.

The looms, &c. are kept up in full trim by the masters.

Light, 3 *d.* per week, as at Hawick.

Very

Very good, except in times of slack trade. Meat common at dinner. Condition

Excellent. Parochial school, and several private ones. A charitable society, educates 40 children gratis, to which no weaver's child belongs, all the weavers being able to educate their children without aid. Education.

Remedies.

The repeal of the corn-laws strongly urged, as essential to the continuance of commerce. No desire for boards of trade.

GALASHIELS.

Galashiels is perhaps the most thriving of all the woollen districts; its trade is rapidly on the increase. Fabrics.

The fabrics are the same as the foregoing, with the addition of coarse cloths for coats, which are woven of all reeds, from 12 to 24 porters, four to the split; or 24 to 48 porters, two to the split. The Messrs. Cochrane are the chief cloth manufacturers.

All the weaving, with trivial exceptions, is done in factories, where the yarn is also spun by water-power.

Coarse cloths are paid by the ell, at the following rates: 16 porters, and all below (two to the split), 3 *d.* per yard; 17 and 18 porters, 3 ¼ *d.*; 19 and 20 porters, 3 ½ *d.*; 21 and 22 porters, 4 *d.*, and up to 27 and 28 porters at 5 ½ *d.*; average 13 *s.* 6 *d.*, deducting 3 *d.* only for light. Twills, four to the split, (mixture colour for trowsers) 10 porters (four to split) and under, 3 *d.*; 13 porters, 4 *d.*; 16 porters, 5 *d.* Average wages vary much, from 14 *s.* to 1 *l.*, according to the pattern, which is constantly varying, and the price not always being perhaps accurately proportioned to the work required. The checks are the same as in Hawick, &c., likewise the tartans. The following is a correct Table of the rates: Wages.

TABLE of Wages and Prices for—

	Common Reed.	Breadth.	Price.	Quantity.	Quantity per Week.	Weekly gross Wage.	Weekly clear Wage.
Cloths	22 porters	double	-/4	1 yard	37 yards	12/4	12/
Tartans	21, 4 to split	6/4	-/9	1 ell			16/6
Twill cloth	16, 4 to split	8/4	-/7	1 ell		16/8	16/5
Checks	ditto	ditto	-/5 ½	1 ell		15/3	15/
Shawls	18 porters		-/6	1 ell	42 ells		16/
White plaiding							12/
Blankets							12/

N. B.—As the weavers frequently change from one web to another, and seldom adhere to any particular fabric, the general average of the above, viz. 14/3 5/7 is the best estimate of their clear weekly wages when in full employment.

The condition of the weavers is, of course, exceedingly good. Education is well attended to, and their morals are very superior to those of Glasgow. Condition.

Against stagnations in trade they advocate a repeal of the corn-laws. Remedies.

EARLSTON.

1. Very stout ginghams, 16°°. Fabrics.
2. Blankets and plaidings.

The weavers are employed by manufacturers at Earlston. The woollen looms are recently established.

Woollens: one web per week is on the average woven by each weaver, measuring from 60 to 67 ells, and paid at 12 *s.* net. Hours are eleven on every day, except Saturday when they work one hour short. Wages.

 Cottons:

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Cottons: are paid at 4½*d.* per ell for stripes, and 5*d.* for checks. Average net wages 6*s.* per week, at 14 hours' work per day.

Education. The children can read, write and cast accounts.

Remedies. The weavers complain of the corn-laws as their greatest grievance.

SELKIRK.

Fabrics. There are two woollen factories here; the one belonging to Baillie Gilmour, of Glasgow, and the other to Messrs. Davidson, Brown & Co. of Galashiels and Peebles.

The fabrics woven here are the same as at Galashiels.

Power-Loom Cloth. Baillie Gilmour is beginning to weave cloth by power.

Wages. As at Galashiels.

Twill trowsers called "Orleans," 16 (4) porters, 6*d.* per ell for weaving; sold at from 2*s.* 6*d.* to 4*s.* 6*d.* per ell, according to pattern and reed.

Condition. Customer weavers average 10*s.* per week.

Remedies. Exceedingly good.

Increase of Woollen Trade. None required.

A waterfall belonging to the corporation was put up to auction here a month or two ago. The corporation agreed among themselves to sell it for 40*l.* So great was the competition to obtain it, that it was knocked down at 210*l.* This I had from the Provost Chapman.

INVERLEITHAN.

Fabrics. A BROAD-CLOTH factory, where tartans are also woven, belonging to a Galashiels' manufacturer.

Wages. A few of the tartan weavers earn the same wages as the Galashiels' weavers, but some have been engaged *per year* at 11*s.* 6*d.* per week clear, who left the cotton weaving at Peebles, finding it so bad a trade.

The weavers at Galashiels, it is said, would not have permitted this infringement on their rate of wages had they attempted it there.

Condition. Very good.

Remedy. Against stagnations they desire repeal of corn-laws.

PEEBLES.

Fabrics. CHIEFLY cambric handkerchiefs with borders. Customer weavers are decreasing considerably.

Wages. Gross average wage, best work, 7*s.* 4*d.*; deductions, loom and light, 1*s.*; carriage, 4*d.*; clear wage, 6*s.*

Ticket. $15^{00}\frac{6}{4}$ bordered cambric, 112½ porters (double), 17 shots to the glass, 2½*d.* per yard.

Condition. The weavers here being close on the borders of the woollen district, migrate there as much as possible, and obtain other employment from the farmers, gardeners, &c., as much as they are able. There is less extreme distress here than in many of the cotton districts.

Education. There are good schools here. The parochial school is 2*s.* 3*d.* per quarter for reading; 2*s.* 9*d.* for reading and writing.

Remedy. The corn-laws repealed.

EDINBURGH.

Fabrics. CHIEFLY shawls and plaids, composed of silk and wool, of very rich designs and excellent quality; mostly for the London market. Checks, stripes, tartans, bed-furniture and umbrella cloths are also woven here. The shawls are all woven in factories.

In

In the cotton department, such as stripes, &c., the gross weekly wages do not exceed 5*s.*, from which 1*s.* 1*d.* falls to be deducted for loom-rent, light, &c., leaving net wages, 3*s.* 11*d.* These are old men. Wages.

In the shawl factories the wages average 10*s.* per week clear, after deducting 4*s.* 6*d.* for draw-boy, 2*s.* for loom-rent, 3*d.* for light and coals, and 3*d.* for twisting webs, per week, and also allowing two months of lost time in mounting looms when a change takes place.

16°° plaid shawl $^{6}/_{4}$ wide, $3\frac{1}{2}$ yards long, plain middle, and filled at both ends, which usually takes one week to weave, gross wages 19*s.*; deductions as above.

10°° gingham, No. 12 weft, 11 shots, 2*d.* per ell.

The women wind yarns, and the children of the weavers are employed as draw-boys, &c. Other Employment.

The condition of the weavers here, especially of the shawl weavers, is as good as in other places; those weaving stripes and checks are worst off, and participate in the general poverty of cotton weavers. Condition.

This place is well supplied with good and cheap schools, viz. parochial, sessional and private; the two former as low as $1\frac{1}{2}$*d.* per week, and those who cannot afford this, may have their children educated gratis. Notwithstanding this, weavers state that their children are growing up in a state of ignorance comparatively speaking; but there is little credit due to this assertion, except as regards the draw-boys. Education.

Manufacturers and weavers state, that the decline in the manufactures of Edinburgh shawls is in consequence of the piracy by the Paisley manufacturers of their patterns, the competition of French fabrics, and particularly the corn-laws. Causes.

Manufacturer and weaver are unanimous in advocating a repeal of the corn-laws as the only effectual remedy. Some of the weavers wish foreign goods prohibited until a repeal takes place; a majority of the manufacturers are also in favour of a copyright for one year, for the protection of patterns. Remedies.

MUSSELBURGH.

The Messrs. Porteous have for the last 20 years established a horse-hair factory here, and two new ones are now being established; they are said to be the only ones in Scotland. Fabrics.

There are several classes of this work; the most common is that of the common black horse-hair for *chair* and *sofa* bottoms. Horse-hair weaving.

The width is usually from 16 to 20 inches, but some are occasionally woven of a yard in length. The warp is of tow dyed, the weft only of hair; each weft is put in separately. The weaving is done entirely by women; one woman who weaves and moves the treddles, passes a long wand, with a notch at the end, each time through the warps; and into this notch, her attendant, the "server," inserts the end of a weft or hair, which the weaver draws through, and strikes down the lay. No shuttles can be used, as the hair is of course too short, and it cannot be joined: 9°° is the common reed used. Chair covers.

A beautiful white hair cover is woven here for drawing-room furniture, with coloured stripes and figured work; the warp of this is cotton. Nearly the same fabric, only of a narrower width, is woven for boy's caps; reed 13°°, one hair to the split. Light covers.

This has been entirely woven here, and consists of yellow hair warp, and black hair weft; it is a yard wide, and has a border on each side of chesnut hair; it is very thick. Carpet for the House of Commons.

Chair-covers, 22 inches wide, $6\frac{1}{2}$*d.* per yard; about 4 yards are woven per day, making 13*s.* gross per week, of which one-third is paid to the server, leaving 8*s.* 8*d.* clear above the average. Wages.

Boys' caps average 6*s.* clear per week.

House of Commons' cloth paid per week at 10*s.* and 12*s.*

Sail-cloth. Also a large sail-cloth factory, almost entirely similar to that of Greenock and Port Glasgow, belonging to Mr. Gavin.

Wages. Average perhaps 9*s.* 6*d.* per week clear, but fluctuate from 5*s.* to 1*l.* 2*s.*

LEITH.

Fabrics. Sail-cloths: there are two factories here, one belonging to Messrs. Hay & Co., the other to Mr. Hutton.

Wages. Vary according to the age or strength of the weaver, from 10*s.* to 16*s.* per week.

LASSWADE.

Fabrics. The fabrics here consist entirely of carpets and damasks. There is no difference in the fabrics of the Brussels and Wilton carpets from those of Kilmarnock, except that, by a mechanical improvement, the necessity of draw-boys is superseded; whilst the new machine is simpler than a Jacquard. No Scotch carpets are woven here.

The Persian fabric described at Kilmarnock, is here extended to broad carpets, the weft being shot across by means of a cross-bow. The carpets are woven in this way in their entire breadth, the pattern being tied in by boys, as in the Persian rugs.

Wages. The wages at this factory are the maximum paid in my district.

Silk damask is paid at 1*s.* 10*d.* per yard. There are 4 pieces of 30 yards in the web, which 4 pieces are woven in about 60 days, including all stoppages.

Boys who tie in the weft to the Persians, 3*s.* per week.

Carpets are paid as follows:—

1. *Points,* 13 porter, 27 inches wide, at 10*d.* per yard; average amount woven from 28 to 30 yards per week.

2. *Combres,* same porter and width, 11*d.* per yard; 27 yards per week.

3. Wilton carpets, same porter and width, 1*s.* 2*d.* per yard; 18 yards per week.

Deductions. Gross wages therefore average from 1*l.* to 1*l.* 5*s.* per week; no reductions have been made for 3*d.* per week on points and combres.

Frequently idle, a week waiting for webs.

Hours worked. Ten per day.

Combination. None. No reduction of wages desired by the manufacturer.

Condition. Excellent.

Education. Good; 4*s.* 6*d.* per quarter charged for reading and writing, &c., 2*s.* 6*d.* for reading only.

GENERAL MENTAL AND MORAL CONDITION.

Moral and Mental condition. The weavers, both in morals and intelligence, form two distinct classes almost entirely demarcated by age. The older class, despite the demoralizing influence of their poverty, retain no inconsiderable portion of that high mental and moral merit which so long and signally distinguished them among the artisans of the Empire.

In religious knowledge and acquaintance with the Bible, they are still equal, if not superior, to every other class of workmen in Scotland. Attendance on places of public worship is unhappily on the decline, even among the elder class, at least in Glasgow, where the influence of their poverty, owing to the higher rents, rates, &c., is more pressing than in the country. Want of decent clothing is almost invariably assigned as the cause of non-attendance, and by some of the witnesses in Glasgow, inability to pay for sittings in the churches, and dislike to accept them gratuitously as paupers.

In all the above points, there is a marked difference among the younger generation of the weavers; they are far less educated, and far more prone to the vices in which their poverty chiefly checks their indulgence. I have met, nevertheless, with instances of high cultivation of mind, and propriety of conduct among the younger branches of the weaving body; but I have remarked that these individuals were invariably among the more prosperous portion. Poverty is a great barrier to enlightenment. When a man's whole faculties are strained to the utmost, from sunrise

sunrise to sunset, to procure a miserable subsistence, he has neither leisure, aptitude, nor desire, for information; he is assimilated to the beasts of burthen, and gradually partakes of their animalism; for, in the degree in which extreme privation bars out civilization and refinement, is scope given to each brutalising impulse and debasing passion.

Pecuniary prosperity is very far indeed from necessarily inducing either virtue or intelligence; but a community of educated and moral paupers is a phenomenon which I believe the world never did and never will behold.

The degenerating influence of excessive poverty and toil was never more strongly exemplified than in the case of the hand-loom weavers of Scotland. The present generation were born in a position replete with every circumstance, save one, which could favour the mental progress of an artisan. The high intelligence of their parents, their constant companionship with them, both at meal-time and working hours, the delicate and cleanly nature of their art, the facilities it affords for attaining information, and even for reading, during the operation of labour, added to the natural stimulus to education afforded to their pride by the high intellectual reputation of their body,—all these afforded incentives and facilities for improvement, such as indisputably prove the power of the solitary counteracting curse, which has, notwithstanding, dragged them from the highest to among the lowest ranks in the civilization of their class. Thus, true is it, as you observe in your Instructions, that "among bodies of artisans inhabiting the same district, and surrounded by the same degree of civilization, and the same means of instruction, it is perhaps more probable, that pecuniary distress, or, what is more mischievous, great and sudden alterations of prosperity and adversity, will produce a low moral condition, than that a low moral condition will occasion pecuniary distress."

Decay of reading.

The evidences of decaying intelligence among the weaving body are met with in all the towns and most of the villages they inhabit. Book societies, formerly supported by themselves alone, are either extinct, or in the last stage of existence. Newspapers, magazines, reviews, histories, travels, and books on science and philosophy, are well nigh excluded from their dwellings, where, of all others, they were the most frequently found. Newspapers, Chambers' Edinburgh Journal, Tait's Magazine, and Scott's novels, are mostly read. The extent of the knowledge retained by even the elder classes, is necessarily circumscribed.

Funeral societies I have found maintained when every other association was abandoned. So great is the obloquy attached to pauperism, that they provide against its posthumous stigma, even to the sacrifice of their living wants.

The information which the superior class most generally seek, and make sacrifices to obtain, appears to be that relating to the causes which affect their condition; whether in the study of the elementary principles of political economy, the variations and their causes in the commercial relations of the country, or in a vigilant observance of the acts of the Legislature.

Prudence.

With regard to providence, there is but little scope for its exercise; however, I am of opinion that the younger class are, generally speaking, in the habit of spending their money as fast as they get it, and often before. They marry, for the most part, from 24 to 28; perhaps not quite as early as they formerly did; but, instead of first accumulating some capital in the shape of comfortable furniture, a loom, &c., they seldom accumulate any thing worth naming. I do not think the younger class of weavers are more given to intemperance than other working men: they have certainly far less means of indulging in it; but, from their greater weakness of body, a smaller quantity of liquor inebriates them. In the country districts the morals of the weavers are generally better than in the towns.

Tramps.

The most dissolute and immoral class of weavers in Scotland are an itinerant body, called "tramps," of whom at least two-thirds are said to be Irish. They take looms as journeymen from the master of a shop, who procures webs for them from the manufacturer, and not unfrequently, after they are three quarters woven, they cut them out of the loom, and decamp with them. They are notorious as the most idle, profligate, noisy, drunken and quarrelsome set of people in the weaving districts.

Among the married and elder class of weavers there is very little drinking. One of the best and strongest evidences afforded of the good sense and feeling of the weavers was, that of the admirable patience and quietness with which

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they endured the severe suffering they underwent during the stagnation of employment in 1837. They bore up to the very last against their hunger, till they were at length compelled to assemble in the green at Glasgow, with a view as I was informed, of parading through the streets in a body, begging bread, a resource nothing but starvation would have driven them to. Mr. John M'Leod, long looked upon by them as their best friend, accompanied by other manufacturers, went down among them, and addressed them, promising some relief. They returned quietly home, and waited till the soup kitchens were opened, and webs given out to some of them to weave. Their general conduct on this occasion was deserving of great praise.

Embezzlement.

Embezzlement of weft is the chief vice of the weavers; it is "the sin which most easily besets them," and one which must be treated at some length among the causes of the depression of wages.

EVIDENCE.

The following are extracts from the evidence given on the moral and religious condition of the adult weavers:—

John M'Laren, esq., treasurer of the Barony parish—"Thinks they attend worship less than other classes, owing entirely to their poverty. That the elder branches of them are well conducted and well informed. Believes that the younger branches, and those who have more recently come into business, are, for the most part, less moral, and are men of quite a different character to the original weavers, though exceptions exist.

"Thinks the elder class struggle against their poverty, and retain their respectability. Believes the Irish, as a class, less moral and well conducted than the Scotch."

Rev. *Finlay M'Allister*, missionary, Camlachie, says—"As regards Camlachie, weavers attend worship less than other classes. Two classes of weavers; the elder branches have better clothing and a greater disposition to attend than those who have come more recently into the trade, and perhaps never had clothes. Marked difference in favour of the older class in point of morals. A disinclination to accept seats gratis prevents a great number from attending. Great improvement since witness went among them; within two years there were 19 spirit shops, now only 14. Many of the younger class were living unmarried when he went first among them, but has persuaded several to marry since. Depends on education; finds a Scotchman as low and debased, if uneducated, as an Irishman; but, generally speaking, the Scotch are the most moral. Meets with some Irishmen whose morals are as elevated as any Scotchman's; traces this to an early religious education.

"The more recent weavers are very little educated; many of 20 years of age obliged to be taught their letters, and many felt ashamed to learn.

"The older ones are invariably better educated.

"Reading usually of a political nature, magazines, &c.; time for reading very much abridged."

Mr. *James Gordon*, weaver, Glasgow—"Believes that more would go to church if they could buy clothing, and pay for seats; many go now. Thinks ministers generally are deficient in their visits to the weavers' houses. Weavers generally have not the means or time of obtaining the information which concerns their trade.

"Believes the class called 'tramps,' consist chiefly of the most immoral description of weavers, and the respectable masters of shops are not in the habit of letting their looms and shops to them. Most part of the weavers read novels, or other light works, which do them little good."

John M'Leod, esq., manufacturer, Glasgow—"Does not think that poverty prevents the weavers from attending church, and also thinks that they could procure decent clothing, and that he will undertake to say that there is no place of worship in Glasgow where they cannot get seats free, who are unable to pay. That he, as a deacon, will engage to find accommodation for all his own weavers.

"Believes the weavers, as a class, to be, in spite of their poverty, as decent and moral as can be found in Scotland. Thinks, notwithstanding, that the weavers drink whiskey to the injury of their families; but has not seen above *one* or *two* in the course of eight years drunk at his own door."

Thomas

Thomas Davidson, esq., manufacturer, Glasgow—" From personal knowledge cannot say, but is unable to conceive how it is possible for a weaver who has a family, at the present rate of wages, to obtain clothing decent enough to attend places of worship, and to pay for seats in church. Has seen statements to that effect, which he has reason to believe are correct. Hears statements from the manufacturers to the effect that the weavers are deteriorated in morals; thinks it a natural consequence of their depressed condition, but does not think they are worse than other classes. Thinks the worst paid labourers generally the most addicted to intemperance; also thinks that, owing to their weak state, a small quantity of liquor produces as much intoxication among them as a greater quantity on a stronger man.

" Less time for improving their minds; thinks the character of the publications now read by the working classes is less calculated to improve them than formerly. Thinks there is an inferiority on the part of the Irish, who are less in the habit of mental cultivation generally speaking.

The Rev. Dr. *Black*, minister of the Barony parish, says—" It is his distinct opinion, from personal knowledge of the fact, that a very large portion of the hand-loom weavers are prevented from attending places of public worship by the extreme state of poverty to which they are reduced, and their consequent inability to provide themselves with decent clothing, or to pay for their sittings. There are no free sittings for the poor, generally speaking, in the churches of Glasgow and suburbs; in the Barony kirk there are 50 only appropriated by special grant.

" Thinks it very probable that a poor person taking a seat in one of the churches of Glasgow, might be removed therefrom, but that the same exclusion would hardly be visited on a well-dressed person. [This had been stated by a preceding witness.] With regard to the refusal on the part of ministers to make collections for the hand-loom weavers, the only case he recollects, he was prompted in so doing, by a belief that it was better for the hand-loom weavers themselves that he should co-operate with the Lord Provost and magistrates as he was then doing for their effectual relief, than by making a collection in his church, which would not amount probably to above 12*l.*

" Within the last four months, ministers, both of the established and dissenting churches, have collected nearly 1,000*l.* for the suppression of fever, by the establishment of soup kitchens, and other means of relief; moreover, that sermons were preached in behalf of the distressed, in Bridgeton parish church, Mr. Edwards' relief church, and in Mr. Achison's episcopalian church; and that in the course of one twelvemonth, the three clergymen connected with these churches expended somewhere about 140*l.* on the poor.

" Considers the weavers, as a class, extremely moral and well-informed."

Mr. *Robert Lang*, weaver, Glasgow—" Thinks attendance on places of worship much decreased, especially since 1826, because that the General Assembly petitioned the Legislature at that period in favour of the then existing duties on foreign grain.

" Thinks this had its effect in prejudicing the minds of the hand-loom weavers to a considerable extent. Thinks that a few only are really prevented by poverty; and that many of those who are very poor, would not go if they were richer. Thinks that the weavers would not accept of free sittings if they were offered to them, from their general dislike to be considered paupers. Is of opinion that poverty has produced a disregard to religion; for their attention is entirely engrossed by their anxiety and striving to procure their daily meals; and as morality without religion is impossible, it follows, as a necessary result, that the morals of the weavers are deteriorated. They are too straightened in circumstances to procure information, which they are nevertheless willing to acquire."

James Robertson, esq., manufacturer, Paisley—" Speaks well of their moral character, and that they attend places of worship, especially the better paid. Are fully as moral as any other class."

Mr. *John Osborne*, weaver, Paisley,—" Does not believe they are prevented by want of clothes from attending places of worship; thinks it is more from carelessness, and want of inclination, and numbers from principles akin to Mr. Owen."

Mr. *Peter Higgins*, weaver, Paisley,—" Thinks they go much less to church than formerly; want of proper clothing the chief cause; some from principle."

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EDUCATION.

The education of the children of the weavers shares to a melancholy extent in the deterioration of their fortunes. No difference of opinion exists on this point. Three-fourths of the children are growing up, if not totally without education, at least receiving it so deficiently as to be of no earthly use to them in after-life. They frequent places of public worship but very indifferently, owing to want of clothing. Sunday schools are better attended than any other sort of school; but although moral principles, and, in some slight degree, religious knowledge, are imparted to them, the periods of instruction are sufficiently removed to enable the child to forget during the six days what he learns on the Sabbath. As means of education, properly so called, Sabbath schools are wholly inefficient.

The ages at which the children of weavers attend week-day schools, are usually between 7 and 10, at which latter age their labour is available to their parents, and their education generally terminates. Evening schools are sometimes attended for about an hour or two, after the children are thoroughly fatigued with the toil of the day, and their faculties benumbed.

The parochial school system of Scotland might be made a splendid means to the enlightenment of the people; many as are the defects of its existing organization, I am of opinion that it has in a great measure increased the facilities of education. Where the parochial school is well conducted, it supplies all the purposes to which a school can minister; and where it is not, it almost invariably provokes the establishment of a rival, which flourishes by its superiority, and often regenerates its competitor.

The great fault of the Scottish parochial schools, is the absence of a sufficiently vigilant superintendence, and, above all, a responsibility on the part of the master. The master is appointed by the heritors of the parish, but he is generally left to the guidance of the minister, who is by no means invariably the most competent person to control a school. The children, moreover, of dissenting parents, do not profit by parochial schools.

The salaries of the masters vary according to the amount of scholars; a maximum and minimum salary is established by Act of Parliament, out of which, I believe, the average amount is about 30*l.* per annum; in addition. there are fees for teaching, which run usually at 2*s.* 6*d.* per quarter for reading only, and at the rate of from 3*d.* to 6*d.* for each of the other elementary branches of education additional: Latin is generally professed to be taught.

The schoolmaster's gross salary will not average 80*l.* per annum. Many of these masters are men educating for the ministry, and appear, for the most part, to be intelligent men; but of their competence in the science of teaching, I have seen but few proofs. There are, of course, many exceptions; but, generally speaking, the children who can read even intelligibly, have not the remotest notion of the sense of what they utter.

I am firmly of opinion that the chief merit of the parochial schools is, their having given rise to other and better ones; and which manage in most of the parishes in Scotland to support themselves at the same fees, or but very slightly higher, and without the parochial salary.

As long, however, as the weaver's bread depends on the labour of the young children of his family, no facilities of education, however great, will in any sufficient degree avail them.

The harness weavers, whose means give them somewhat greater power of educating their children, are generally obliged to employ them as draw-boys, or draw-girls, at very early ages. The Jacquard looms are an advantage in this respect, and I usually find where they are in use, the children are better educated.

Whilst I distinctly assert that the great body of the children of the cotton weavers are growing up in a state of semi-barbarism, I must also state, that I believe that there is no one feeling more deeply or strongly implanted in the breasts of the parents, than a desire to educate them. In fact, where they are educated, the parents are almost always themselves the teachers.

They make, generally speaking, great exertions to effect it; and I know an instance where clothes have been parted with to keep a child at school.

In the woollen, and some of the linen, districts, where the parents have the means, the children of the weavers are far better educated.

EVIDENCE.

EVIDENCE.

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Mr. *John M'Farlane*, weaver, Glasgow, states—"That the only means almost of education is the Sunday school, where the children do not learn much. Not one-half can read well; very few can write; believes if things continue in their present state, their children will in another generation be wholly ignorant. Does not attribute this to want of desire to educate their children on the part of the weavers, but to poverty. A few only attend private schools. Amount of money inconsiderable, not above 1*s.* per month.

Mr. *John Ure*, harness-weaver, Glasgow—"Thinks the children are being brought up for the most part uneducated and demoralized."

Mr. *James Black*, weaver, Glasgow—"Thinks children are not being properly educated; though some attend evening schools, they are too tired to profit by them. Intelligence and knowledge of the weavers will consequently cease with the present generation. Children are growing up in perfect ignorance."

Mr. *William Buchanan*, weaver, Glasgow, states—"That the education of the children of weavers is confined generally to reading passages in the Bible; and that their comprehension of what they read is very deficient. They are put to work at from 8 to 10 years of age."

James Hutchison, esq., manufacturer, Glasgow, states—"That he believes that poverty is preventing that degree of education which the parents would otherwise bestow on their children; and who are therefore growing up, comparatively with their parents, in a state of ignorance."

The Reverend Dr. *Black*, minister of the Barony parish—"Thinks that the weavers' children must be growing up sadly educated, as far as he knows, owing to the poverty of the parents, who nevertheless desire to give them education, were it within their power."

The Committee of Weavers at Dumfries state—"That poverty prevents their educating their children properly."

Mr. *William Kennedy*, weaver, Kilmarnock, states—"That the children of weavers there generally learn to read and write; but are obliged to learn after leaving the loom in the evening."

Mr. *John Duffy*, weaver, Ayr, states—"That not half the weavers' children are getting education."

Messrs. *Warnock*, *Blair*, *Jackson* & *Thomson*, weavers of Edinburgh, state—"That education there is very deficient; and that children are sent very early to the loom; but that the means of education are very abundant."

Comparative condition of other Trades.

I proceed, as far as the limits of this Report will admit, to enter on the comparison required between the hand-loom weavers in point of physical and moral condition, and "all the other labouring classes in the community."

In point of wages, the foregoing Tables scarcely develope in their full extent the singular and perfect metamorphosis of the hand-loom weavers, with every other class of artisans in Scotland, during the last 40 years. It is impossible to obtain an accurate table of the rate of wages paid to either class of labourers at a remote period; but I have it on the most competent authority, that from 1785 up to 1806, hand-loom weaving was the best trade going, and that in no other were wages so high. Any of the more skilled weavers could easily earn from 30*s.* to 40*s.* weekly. In fact the weavers, though a fall occurred in the interim, maintained the ascendancy, with some slight exceptions, till the peace of 1815, when they experienced a sudden depression, and continued to sink below other trades, till they completed their fall, from the highest to the lowest of all.

I have paid particular attention to your instructions with regard to ascertaining whether the "general fall of wages, and consequent distress of the hand-loom weavers, has been rapidly progressive ever since the termination of the late war," or whether, as stated by Mr. Marshall, in the Parliamentary Report of 1835,

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(p. 28, question 193) they have been getting uniformly worse in condition since the year 1793. Mr. Marshall's words are—" I find that they have been getting progressively worse in condition since 1793, but *more uniformly so* since the year 1816; and worse than any other class of labourers, except the agricultural labourers." This statement is fully confirmed by the evidence I have been enabled to collect.

Highland Cottages.

It would appear, that the fluctuations in the hand-loom wages, as exhibited in the foregoing Tables, prior to 1816 were the effects rather of that fitful and feverish state of commerce incidental to a period of war, and of which all trades equally partook, than of the stable and cogent causes of depression which set in at the re-establishment of peace, and have ever since born the weaver steadily down beneath their uniform and fatal pressure.

The physical condition of other classes is greatly superior to that of the hand-loom weavers. They are almost uniformly better fed, better clothed and better housed; the only exceptions I have seen, are the agricultural labourers in the Highland districts, and a portion of the population of Glasgow. One of the first Highland cottages I entered, presented a most uninviting aspect. The furniture was of the worst and most meagre kind; the fire was on the hearth, without any grate; there was no ceiling to the room, and the smoke careered among the rafters till it found a vent in a hole in the roof, occasionally taking a discursive flight into the bed-room, which was blackened with soot. As is by no means uncommon in the cottages of the Highland peasantry, there was a loom in a hole just large enough to stand in. The owner occasionally wove blankets, and coarse linens for his own and his neighbours' use. These people, however, (at least in the midland Highlands, though I believe not in the north) are better off, in point of earnings and food, than the hand-loom weavers of the *cotton* districts. The people in the cottage I have described (and it was a fair sample of the rest) owned they had meat frequently for dinner; they kept a cow, and the man earned generally from 1*s*. 9*d*. to 2*s*. per day.

Means of Employment for Weavers' Children.

It is sometimes asserted, that the weaver is better off than better paid labourers, because he has readier means of employing his children in weaving. In the first place, all other labourers and artisans have the means, and do employ and find work for their children also. Even the men who break stones by the road-side, constantly take their children with them to assist. In the next place, a weaver's child can only be taught to weave by the sacrifice of the father's time, in superintending him for at least the first ten or twelve months, during which period the child will not earn above 3*s*. 6*d*. per week.

I am confident in the belief, that no other class (as a class), are so badly off as the hand-loom cotton weavers.

Effect of the Residence of the Gentry among the Peasantry.

The peasantry of the south of Scotland have a decided advantage over the weavers, from the residence of the country gentry among them. However little it may matter to the pecuniary interest of the nation, where the owners of property spend their incomes, it matters most essentially to the moral and physical welfare of those they dwell amongst. This is especially the case in the south of Scotland, where the incomes of the landed gentry resident on their estates, are but seldom large enough to diffuse the vicious influences, not unfrequently generated by the profligacy of the servants and retainers of large establishments. Compare, for instance, the poorest peasant on the estate of Mr. Monteith, of Carstairs, with the hand-loom weaver of Lanark; the superiority of the former will speak for itself in their comparative appearance. Take even other instances of the influence of resident gentry, who may be less noted than Mr. Monteith for the munificence of their charities, and the liveliness of their sympathy with the poor. Will the peasantry of their neighbourhood be found frequently in distress, or in constant need of the common necessaries of life?

In health they are well paid, and in sickness they are relieved and tended; but go into the cottages of the hand-loom weavers of Girvan, Maybole, or Airdrie, and how few will be found in which some necessary article of comfort is not wanting; whilst laborious exertion alone preserves the balance between scanty food and absolute starvation. Seldom are the weavers of the cotton districts within the cognizance, and never under the immediate care, of the resident gentry; and rarely do the language

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Wynds of Glasgow.

language of sympathy, or the kindly influences of charity, gladden their damp and dreary dwellings.

Though in point of wages the cotton hand-loom weavers are thus decidedly inferior to every other class of operatives, yet in point of physical and social debasement there exists a portion of the population in the district I have investigated, very many degrees worse,—I allude to the dense and motley community who inhabit the low districts of Glasgow, consisting chiefly of the alleys leading out of the High-street, the lanes in the Calton, but particularly the closes and wynds which lie between the Trongate and the Bridgegate, the Salt-market and Maxwell-street. These districts contain a motley population, consisting in almost all the lower branches of occupation; but chiefly of a community whose sole means of subsistence consists in plunder and prostitution. Under the escort of that vigilant officer, Captain Miller, the superintendent of the Glasgow Police, I have four times visited these districts, once in the morning and three times at night; I have seen human degradation in some of its worst phases, both in England and abroad, but I can advisedly say, that I did not believe until I visited the wynds of Glasgow, that so large an amount of filth, crime, misery and disease existed on one spot in any civilized country. The wynds consist of long lanes, so narrow that a cart could with difficulty pass along them; out of these open the "closes," which are courts about 15 or 20 feet square, round which the houses, mostly of three stories high, are built; the centre of the court is the dunghill, which is probably the most lucrative part of the estate to the laird in most instances, and which it would consequently be esteemed an invasion of the rights of property to remove. The houses are for the most part let in flats, either to the lowest class of labourers or prostitutes, or to lodging-keepers; these latter places are the grand resort and favoured abodes of all those to whom a local habitation and a name are professionally inconvenient. They are likewise the resting place of outcasts of every grade of wretchedness and destitution. In the more costly of these abodes, where separate beds are furnished at the price of 3*d.* per night, the thieves and prostitutes chiefly congregate. I shall not easily forget the cool sang froid with which a housebreaker whom the superintendent of the police detected in bed in a snug corner of one of these dens, obeyed his invitation to accompany him to the office, or the composure with which his comrades (of whom there were at least a dozen), male and female in the apartment, contemplated the scene from their respective beds. Considering that our party consisted of five unarmed men, in the dead of the night, and in the centre of a savage and desperate population of at least 7,000 or 8,000 persons,—the calmness of the whole proceeding, the perfect recognition of the moral power of discipline, and its ascendancy in the very stronghold of outrage, was, to say the least of it, singularly impressive. It appeared to me that there was some philosophy even among these thieves, and that the art of government might still be simplified. As soon as the housebreaker had completed his toilet, an operation which he diversified with various pleasantries, divided between the officers and his fair bedfellow, who was making sundry vain efforts to conceal herself from their scrutiny, we proceeded to other lairs in the neighbourhood without molestation or hindrance. Such is the discipline preserved by the police, who are the only persons who ever visit these habitations, at least *at night*, when its population are alone assembled.

In the lower lodging-houses ten, twelve, and sometimes twenty persons of both sexes and all ages sleep promiscuously on the floor in different degrees of nakedness. These places are, generally as regards dirt, damp and decay, such as no person of common humanity to animals would stable his horse in.

Many of the worst houses are dilapidated and in a dangerous state, and are condemned by the Dean of Guild's Court, a sentence of which the execution appears to be generally postponed, and which renders these abodes doubly desirable to the occupants, as the passing of sentence prevents the levy of rent. The lower parts of most of these houses are either spirit shops, pawn shops, or eating houses. The population of all these districts is probably 30,000; it certainly exceeds 20,000: they consist in great portion of the Irish, and of Highlanders. Many of the younger girls, and there are a multitude of them, who frequent these places, appear to have been driven there by sheer want, and apply to Captain Miller to be rescued from misery, in great numbers. No efficient aid

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can of course be rendered them under existing institutions, and hundreds in a year become inured to crime, and pass through the rapid career of prostitution, drunkenness and disease, to an early grave.

Spirit drinking.

The spirit shops in Glasgow amounted at the last census to one in every ten houses throughout the city. The proportion is of course greater in the low districts.

The following is the amount of spirits consumed in England, Ireland and Scotland:

	England.	Ireland.	Scotland.
Population - - - -	13,897,187	7,767,401	2,365,114
Gallons of Spirits - - -	12,341,238	12,293,464	6,767,715

Thus it appears, that the quantity of spirits consumed in England is seven pints and one-ninth per head on the population; in Ireland rather more than thirteen pints per head; and *in Scotland twenty-three pints per head per annum!* When the drunkards in Glasgow become too poor to satiate their appetite for spirits, they now resort in great measure to laudanum, which in an adulterated state is consumed in considerable quantities, and regularly sold by many of the chemists.

Such being the state of things in large districts of Glasgow, it is not surprising that the number of persons who died last year was 10,270 (being at the rate of one in 24.63 to the whole population); or that out of that number 2,180 died of typhus fever, which never leaves Glasgow; or that personal outrages, vitriol throwing and assassination, should occur in the open streets. The only wonder is, that health and life are half as well preserved as they are.

In my visits to the quarter I have described, I was at different times accompanied by Baillie Campbell, one of the magistrates of Glasgow, Lawrence Hill, esq., one of Her Majesty's Justices of the Peace, and by Dr. Cowan, M.D.

Few, if any weavers inhabit the more criminal districts, to whom the above remarks do not apply.

Low districts of Edinburgh.

I visited the parts of Edinburgh likewise where the lowest portion of the community reside, but nothing which can for a moment be compared with the wynds of Glasgow exists there. It is my firm belief that penury, dirt, misery, drunkenness, disease and crime culminate in Glasgow to a pitch unparalelled in Great Britain.

Intelligence of the Scottish Artisans and deep discontent among them.

The intelligence of the artisans of Scotland has been nowise overrated; the elder branches of the workmen in other trades are nearly, if not quite equal to the elder weavers alike in artistical skill, in mental acquirements and habits of thought; whilst the younger generation very greatly excel the cotemporary class of the weaving population.

If it be true that the working classes are the life-blood of a community, and that the vitality of the latter depends mainly on the healthfulness of the former, the mental as well as the physical condition of the many will ever rank among the first objects of the vigilant solicitude of a patriotic Government. Feeling that any detail of the information on this point I have gathered during and prior to the present inquiry, might be deemed impertinent to its objects, I would merely venture to remark, that there are elements in the mind of the artisan, millions of the north, which no Government can contemplate with indifference, disregard with impunity. Were they found following in the wake of the miscreants who counsel incendiarism, or heeding the frenzy of egotists and mountebanks, valorous in the conscious impunity of their impotence, I should neither accredit their grievances, nor attach importance to their feelings. It is because I know that the great body of them view such persons with contempt, that I deem those feelings of vital moment, and believe the disregard of them to be imminently perilous to the peace and welfare of society.

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CAUSES.

General Causes affecting Wages.

BEFORE stating the causes to which my investigation leads me to attribute the depressed state of the weavers, I would beg to state the general principle by which the rate of wages appears to me to be determined.

I believe, with Mr. Mill, that "the rate of wages depends on the proportion between population and employment, or, in other words, capital;" for capital is alone profitable when employed, and consequently always is employed; but it can only be employed by means of labour directly or indirectly. Its amount therefore will be the measure of employment for labourers, diminished only by that portion which is unproductively consumed. The share of each labourer will, however, be regulated by the number among whom it is divided. If the number of labourers be *large* in proportion to capital and the demand for labour, they will compete with each other to get employment; and obtain it only by the comparative lowness of the wages they will take: if, on the other hand, the number of labourers be *small* in proportion to capital and the demand for labour, the capitalists must compete with each other to get labourers, and will obtain them only by the comparative highness of the wages they will give.

The capital or wealth of a country consists solely of the amount of its commodities, of which, money is merely the representative, fluctuating in value inversely as they fluctuate in amount. If this be true in an insular country, with a large population, like Great Britain, where *every sort of commodity* cannot be produced in sufficiency for the wants of the whole community, it necessarily follows, that the capital, and consequently the rate of wages, in such a country, must be mainly dependent on the degree in which the surplus productions of this country which we do not want, are easily exchangeable for those of other countries which we do want. The proportion which the commodities labourers use, bears to those they do not use, out of the whole amount of a country's commodities, appears to me an *effect*, and not a *cause* of the rate of wages, and of the above-named elements which determine wages. Increase by twenty per cent. the labourer's power to purchase; and it seems to me that you necessarily increase, by twenty per cent., the demand for, and consequently the production of, the articles he uses. The demand for Galashiels' fine-trowser stuffs increases the capital of the manufacturers, and the wages of the weaver; but the increase of his wages was not caused by any addition to the commodities labourers use, for they do not wear Galashiels' fine-trowser stuffs; though, as an *effect* of the increase of wages, the commodities labourers *do* use, will be increased by increased demand for one which they *do not* use.

In a calculation respecting the cotton trade made in 1833, the whole produce, or value, was set down at 31,338,693 *l.*; from which 8,244,693 *l.* was deducted for value of the raw material. A further sum of 2,600,000 *l.* was set aside for repair of waste in machinery, &c., flour required in dressing, coal, insurances, and other regular expenses, leaving 20,494,000 *l.* to be disposed of among labourers and employers; out of which sum, the labourers received no less than 17,094,000 *l.*, or five-sixths of the whole, the returns of the employers being the remaining 3,400,000 *l.* In short, capital, or the wealth, or the commodities of a country, and the rate of wages, sail in the same boat, of which, excess of population is as the lee-way.

Two elementa causes of low Hand loom Wages.

The proximate cause of the low wages of hand-loom weavers is the excess of labourers above the natural demand for their labour. There are manifestly two distinct ways in which this state of things may be induced; first, by causes which tend to increase the number of labourers; and, secondly, by causes which tend to lessen the demand for their labour.

Facilities in becoming a Weaver.

I shall begin with the first class of these causes; and among them I believe the chief to be, the extreme and peculiar facility with which weaving is learnt, and the almost total absence of all the other obstacles which usually beset the entrance of other trades.

The time which it takes to make a boy of 12 years old, of average cleverness, a thorough weaver, so that he may be able to beam, twist and dress his own web, and require no further superintendence, has been so variously estimated by different witnesses, that I feel reluctant to name any period with positiveness, but, to the best of my judgment, it will be from 18 months to 2 years on any plain work. As to the time required to teach a boy to throw the shuttle, so that he may

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may weave on any of the less fine reeds, to the amount of 3*s.* or 4*s.* per week, I should say two months were ample, supposing the boy to apply and profit by his instructions.

I saw a lad, named Archibald Duncan, in the Bridewell of Glasgow, who had never been taught to weave before he entered the prison, and who had been there six weeks only, and was then weaving a 10°° gingham (blue and white). The lad's own statement (corroborated by Mr. Brebner, the master) was, that he could finish the piece of 51 ells, in ten working days, at 13 hours per diem, the web being beamed, twisted and dressed, ready for him: it was paid $1\frac{1}{2}d.$ per ell by the manufacturer who furnished it; so that this lad had been able in 6 weeks to earn at the rate of $3/9\frac{1}{10}$ per week gross wages.

It must, however, be always recollected, that to the parent who instructs the child, and superintends him, there is a loss of time.

No apprentice fees are charged for entering the weaving trade, nor is the indenture, if written at all, except in very rare cases, ever stamped; neither is there the least capital required to commence with; looms, with all their apparatus complete, being let at 1*s.*, and often 10*d.* per week.

Influx of Hands

In a few years after 1774, when the Legislature tolerated calico at a "protecting" duty of 3*d.* a yard, cottons came into considerable demand in Scotland. Book-muslins, jaconets, and other fine qualities of cotton goods, were woven in 1784; and, as the market extended, the demand for hands raised the wages to their highest pitch, often amounting to 2*l.* per week.

Mr. John M'Leod, an experienced manufacturer, on the above points observes, —"The styles and patterns of fancy muslin work were chiefly adaptations from the silk trade, previously so well known in Paisley, by that truly respectable and most intelligent class of men, the weavers of that time. At first, the cotton yarn broke much; and a high weaving price was necessary per yard, to induce good hands to try it. Few goods comparatively were done for years, say till 1795, 6, and their novelty procured sale among a wealthy class of customers. An article I allude to as yielding 40*s.* per week weaving, I found sold in 1800, after abatements had taken place, at 4*s.* 8*d.* per yard; for I happened to serve under the manufacturer that gave out those very webs in 1799. Even in 1799 improvements had been made in spinning yarn, and in weaving implements, such as introducing the fly-shuttle, &c.; so that very inexperienced youths could then do much more work than first-rate tradesmen a few years earlier. This opened the way to the great influx of hands. A country lad who could get a loom, and a friend to look over him for a few weeks, or *even days*, actually could, after first web-weaving of two months' labour, earn as much as a well paid mason—the highest out-door workmen I remember.

"Harness-work was quite on the same footing, only more expensive and difficult; and was remunerated accordingly, but of confined supply. The harness-work paid 5*s.* per ell then, and now $5\frac{1}{2}d.$ or so, must have sold about 8*s.*, I presume, but I do not remember; 7*s.* 6*d.* floats in my mind for 1802; it is now sold at 9*d.* to 10*d.* per yard."

This state of things appears to have continued, subject to many variations, according to the different foreign ports and markets which the war closed against us, or the demand it occasioned, till the Peace of 1815, when that great excess of labourers took place, from the immense influx of the soldiers who exchanged the musket for the shuttle; from the effect of which, joined to other causes, the weaving trade never recovered itself. Then commenced the depression of wages, which has been itself a main cause of the continued excess of hands, from the difficulties which poverty throws in the way of transition of labour. The immense immigration of Irishmen and Highlanders to Glasgow, has fully absorbed the large increase of demand, even there, for labour.

A weaver's children are more profitable to him at the loom at an early age, than they could possibly be at any other trade. This is a very influential cause also of the superabundance of weavers.

Exclusive Combinations in other Trades.

The combinations in other trades, and the fees exacted by the unions for entrance, are, in most cases, insurmountable barriers to the weaver in his exertions to put his children to other trades. On this subject I have not been able to elicit much evidence from the weavers, beyond, in many instances, their avowal that such was the fact. But at Glasgow, where these impediments are chiefly felt, the terror of the secret and vindictive power of the murderous confederacy,

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confederacy, (well known to be in full organisation, though scotched for a season), was far too great to allow of freedom of speech, on a point, on which it were perilous to be communicative. The weavers, however, undoubtedly suffer from the tyranny of these conspiracies, which not only exclude them and their children from participation in the comparative prosperity of other trades, but are continually driving fresh hands to have resort to the loom, as being well nigh the only employment open and accessible. The military were, in one instance, I was informed by the sheriff of Lanarkshire, employed to protect weavers whilst working during a strike in a colliery.

The Irish flock in also in large numbers, and swell the inundation of weavers on the west coast of Scotland. Thus has weaving become, as it were, the common sewer of all unemployed labour.

The ease and domestic character, cleanliness of the art, and the freedom from all restraint which it possesses, were formerly instrumental to the influx of hands; and although these may still operate in a minor degree (especially with the Irish immigrants, to whom any change is an improvement), I am confident that the great body of the Scottish weavers long to leave the loom, and would willingly sacrifice all the boasted freedom of the craft for a few of the more substantial comforts of life incidental to any other avocation for which they were competent.

Weavers' Strikes.

Combinations among weavers formerly existed, but are wholly extinct to any effective purpose at present. In 1812 a serious strike took place at Glasgow among the weavers, and they were tried under the combination laws. Partial and local strikes occurred at intervals as late as 1826, when a strike took place against the Messrs. Hutchison, large muslin manufacturers at Hamilton, which, together with former combinations, induced them to remove a large portion of their work to Belfast, because, as Mr. James Hutchison stated in his evidence, "he found it his interest, as a manufacturer, to refuse compliance with the terms proposed." Mr. Graham Hutchison, of the same firm, also states, "59 per cent. of our weavers are now in Ireland, 30 per cent. in Irvine, and only 11 per cent. within ten miles of Glasgow. Ten years ago about 70 per cent. of our weavers resided within ten miles of Glasgow, and only about 20 per cent. in Ireland, and 10 per cent. in Irvine.

"In Ireland weaving prices are at present about 14 per cent. lower than in Scotland; but the manufacturer is put to extra expense getting his work done in Ireland. This difference, however, is such as to occasion a gradual transfer of work from Scotland to Ireland."

Effect of Capital in Machinery on Wages.

Strikes among hand-loom cotton weavers are now allowed, even by themselves, to be wholly impracticable. Not only does this arise from the geographical dispersion of their body, from their not working in bodies together, and from their poverty in preventing the contributions essential to the machinery of unions, but from another and a far more potent cause, and which alone explains the difference in wages between power and hand-loom artisans; I allude to the investment of fixed capital in machinery by the *employer* in the one case, and by the *employed* in the other.

The cotton spinner, for instance, when he strikes, injures and stagnates the capital of his employer; hence his power: the hand-loom weaver when he strikes, stagnates his own capital, viz., his loom, and injures himself; hence his weakness. There are other peculiarities such as I have named, but none are equally powerful among the means whereby *classes* of workmen fortify themselves against the general causes of depression.

The exceeding difference of the wages earned even among the hand-loom weavers, by those employed on cottons and those on woollens, is another proof of the power over wages which the possession of machinery by the master gives to the artisan. In the woollen districts the looms almost exclusively belong to the manufacturers, and the men weave in factories.

Highness of Wages in Woollen Districts.

This difference in wages between the woollen and cotton districts formed one of the most salient features in my investigation.

At Galashiels the wages ranged from 12*s.* to 17*s.* per week. At Inverleithan, ten miles further, I found a branch factory weaving the same kind of fabrics, (trowser stuffs, woollen tartans, &c.); and finding the rate of wages much the same as at Galashiels, I passed on to Peebles without further inquiry; here six miles only from Inverleithan, I found the highest average rate not

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exceeding 6*s.* clear per week, the fabric being muslins, woven, as usual, at the shops of the weavers. Here I learnt that three or four of the cotton weavers had been admitted at the Inverleithan factory on lower wages than the regular woollen weavers, but at wages nearly 100 per cent. higher than they made at Peebles. I obtained the names of these men, and returned forthwith to Inverleithan, called them before me, and found the fact exactly as had been stated.

They were engaged by the year at 11*s.* 6*d.* per week; the other weavers being all paid by the ell, and earning from 12*s.* to 17*s.*, and some much more.

The Inverleithan factory is a small one, and I asked whether the same practice had obtained at Galashiels; the answer was, *that the Galashiels' weavers would not permit it.*

There is, however, a strong disposition among the woollen manufacturers themselves to keep wages up, for fear, if they once let them sink, prices will fall also, and their rates of profit be diminished. The fallen plight of the cotton trade operates as a check to any attempts at reduction.

These causes of the high woollen wages are of course, however, all secondary to the force of the principle, that wages depend on the increase of capital, or the demand for labour, compared with the number of labourers.

The woollen trade in the south-east of Scotland is exceedingly thriving; they have managed to manufacture fabrics, such as the checked trowser stuffs and shawls, which are regularly worn by the rich and the poor; from the lobby of the opera to the hovel in the highlands.

The demand is great, and the east of Scotland is not overwhelmed like the west with the tide of Irish immigration; and as the weavers possess, and equitably exercise, the power of preserving a just remuneration for their labour, there is no excess of hands. The masters everywhere expressed themselves desirous not to lower wages, fearing that their profits would likewise fall.

The parent cause, however, of the greater demand in proportion to the supply of woollen stuffs in this district over that of cotton fabrics, consists in the fact, that whereas the cotton fabrics have to contend with a powerful and growing foreign competition, the woollen ones of the east of Scotland are almost wholly exempt from it.

It is most essential to keep this fact fully and constantly in view, which will alone in great measure account for the difference of payment between the woollen and cotton weavers.

Such are the causes which I have found chiefly in operation as tending to depress the wages of hand-loom weaving by means which increase the number of labourers. Among those which are alleged to diminish the demand for labour, the first in order is that of the power-loom.

Power-loom Competition.

There seems but little doubt, that had the power-loom never been invented, the demand for hand-loom weaving would have increased in those departments in which it is now superseded by power. But when from this fact it is attempted to be inferred, that power-looms have injured hand-loom weavers, or have caused their rate of wages to be one fraction lower than they would otherwise have been, I confess the evidence appears to me to be any thing but conclusive.

There seems to be always an omission of half the case on the part of the rapidly expiring economists, who infer that machinery depresses the wages of manual labour; they seem wholly to forget the millions of our doubled population, to whom the capital produced by machinery has, since its introduction, afforded *other employment.* It were well if the gentlemen who are so assiduous in their calculations of the amount of work taken from hand-loom weaving by the power-loom, would also set about a calculation of the number of hands which in all the varied trades of the country power-looms have kept away from the hand-loom, and to which, were it not for the employment supplied to them by power-produced capital, they would in multitudes have resorted. The amount of cotton goods now created in this country by power, it would require the population of Europe to produce. The abundance of cottons forms a large portion of the fund for the employment of labour generally.

I am proud to say, in testimony of the intelligence of Scottish artisans, that ten or twelve of the weavers throughout my entire district have alone countenanced these ignorant fallacies.

I now proceed to the one great cause of depression in all the departments of manufacturing industry; the great cause assigned alike (with, I believe, but three exceptions) by the whole manufacturing body of Scotland.

By

Corn-laws.

By the manufacturers and weavers, as with one voice, the duties on the importation of foreign corn are alleged to be the chief cause of depression in all the departments of manufacturing industry, but more especially that of hand-loom weaving, as being, for the reasons already given, the weakest, and therefore the first to go to the wall.

It is represented by both parties as the great incubus on the commerce of the country; the pernicious influence of which, the mighty progress of machinery and the energy and skill of our artisans have hitherto alone and wonderfully enabled us to withstand.

They state, moreover, that the same vantage ground which these elements of superiority have hitherto afforded to us in the commercial relations of the world, can no longer be retained; that the corn-laws prevent our receiving the chief wealth which the continental merchants have to give in repayment for our goods. By accumulated evidence they show, that, in consequence, we are forcing corn-growing countries, less adapted for manufactures, to erect factories of their own, whilst the low price of provisions enables them to work at low money wages with comfort to the operative.

That the high price of corn here renders competition with the produce of their looms and machinery (erected by British engineers, and worked with cheap labour) daily more difficult. That the combined effect of the corn-laws, in thus compelling foreigners to manufacture for themselves what they formerly purchased of us, and at lower prices than we can manufacture it ourselves, is not only to debar us of the custom of those countries, but is rapidly driving us out of third markets. In short, that a continuation of the laws which prevent us from exchanging with other countries that which each can best produce and spare, must, under the pressure of a population increasing at the rate of nearly 1,100 per day, rapidly induce a diminished increase of the capital of the country, and consequently of the means of maintenance for the people; accompanied by the struggle of the operative to maintain, and the necessity of the employer to reduce, wages, together with the manifold misery, protracted strife and final destitution, incidental to the progress of national impoverishment.

I select the following facts, as illustrative of the opinions thus urgently and universally set forth; for more recent and ample evidence, I beg to refer you to my continental Report.

Foreign Competition.

To prove the relative importance of our foreign and home market, it may be stated, that the value of cotton goods manufactured in Great Britain amounted in 1834, according to M'Culloch's Commercial Dictionary, to 34,000,000*l.* No less than 15,302,571*l.* in value was exported in that year. In the year 1836 the exports of these goods amounted to 18,511,692*l.*, though last year they amounted only to 13,625,464*l.*, a defalcation which, though in some measure owing to the American crisis, was equally great in the shipments to Belgium, Russia, the Hans Towns, &c.

The chief exports in the two last years were, in 1836, 46,463,529*l.*, and in 1837, 36,421,129*l.*

On referring to Burn's "Commercial Glance," I find that a decrease of no less than 3,362,037 yards took place in the above two years in the fabrics of muslins and cambrics, both hand-loom goods.

The increased export of cotton twist concurrently with the decrease of manufactured goods, is perhaps one of the strongest proofs of the progress of the competition of foreign weavers with our own.

In 1836 and 1837 there were exported as follows:—

	Total Lbs. Cotton Yarn exported.	Total Value of Manufactured Cotton Goods exported.	Total Lbs. Linen Yarn exported.	Total Yards of Linen Manufactured Goods exported.
		£.		
1836 - - -	85,495,702	18,511,692	4,574,504	82,088,760
1837 - - -	105,196,529	13,625,464	8,373,100	58,426,333

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The following TABLE will show the extent in which the foregoing exports of twist indicate an increase of manufactures in the countries which chiefly compete with us in the *hand-loom fabrics* of muslins and cambrics alone:—

		Yarns exported.	Manufactured Muslins.		Yarns Exported.	Manufactured Muslins.
		Lbs.	*Yards.*		*Lbs.*	*Yards.*
Hans Towns - -	1836	31,911,358	2,077,598	1837	36,104,776	1,611,179
Holland - -	,,	14,016,795	270,176	,,	17,235,896	239,901
Belgium - -	,,	26,162	226,455	,,	221,336	118,180
India and China -	,,	9,006,052	1,796,162	,,	9,013,319	961,163
France - - -	,,	109,734	37,937	,,	354,025	60,519
Russia - - -	,,	18,866,308	602,855	,,	23,910,019	117,635
Trieste - - -	,,	1,358,760	52,032	,,	1,999,393	14,106
Turkey - - -	,,	1,785,399	682,619	,,	3,387,171	223,224
United States -	,,	205,369	869,715	,,	357,432	604,513

The following letter I select from among many similar attestations to the formidable increase of foreign competition; the names of the parties I have myself suppressed, according to my promise to do so; the names are, however, contained in the original letter, and the well-known respectability of the writer places its veracity beyond question:—

"Glasgow, 10 May 1838,
145, Ingram-street.

"Sir,

"About eighteen months ago I was introduced by Mr. ——— of ——— to Mr. ——— of Switzerland, who had recently come to this country for the purpose of buying yarns, and taking orders for his goods; he showed me the samples he had brought with him, that I might be able to give him the names of some houses who were likely to buy such goods; among his samples were lappets and loom-sewed books, superior in workmanship to any thing I had seen, but as to the value of them I could not speak decidedly: at the same time he showed me samples of Swiss mulls and nainsooks, or light jaconets, both good in quality and cheap; he told me the set, quantity of weft, and breadth of one of the pieces of jaconet, and asked me what we could sell it for in this market, when I stated that the cost price was $9\frac{1}{4}d.$ per yard, and would require $9\frac{3}{4}d.$ for it in order to net five per cent. profit: he then said he would be glad to take an order for the same at $9d.$ per yard.

"I beg to enclose samples of ginghams made by the same gentleman, which I received from —— —— esq.; they were offered to him at $7\frac{3}{4}d.$ per yard, and at that time Mr. —— showed them to Messrs. ——, who make a similar style of goods, and after examining them, stated that they could not produce the same goods under $9\frac{3}{4}d.$, and this I believe was considerably below the value of them at that time, as Messrs. —— present price for 18$^{oo's}$ is $10\frac{1}{2}d.$, and of course would be higher at that time, as goods have fallen considerably since.

"I have asked some buyers what a similar article could be bought for in this market, and the answer generally was, $10\frac{3}{4}d.$ to $11\frac{1}{2}d.$; one buyer in particular, Mr. ——, who is daily purchasing similar goods for the extensive house of Messrs ——, after a very particular examination, told me that $11\,d.$ or $11\,\frac{1}{4}\,d.$ should be about the price; but he thought the colours superior to any he had seen in this market.

"I called also on —— ——, esq., who told me that the same gentleman who had called upon Mr. —— had also called upon him, and that among the different samples of goods, there were some striped and checked books, and that the prices were so low, so much lower than they could be bought in this market, that he at once gave him an order for 100 pieces of stripes, and 500 pieces of checked books.

"In this market, we consider stripe and check books as the same class of goods as plain books, mulls, nainsooks, or light jaconets, in as far as the weaver who works the one, is able to work the whole, and it is quite common for weavers to change once or oftener during the twelve months; so that I feel convinced, if they are able in Switzerland to produce check or stripe books cheaper than we are in this market, so are they also able to produce plain book, mulls and jaconets, upon the same principle.

"I called

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"I called upon Mr. ——, who introduced me to Mr. ——, and, among other questions, I asked what quantity of yarns Mr. —— might consume in twelve months; at first Mr. —— hesitated a little, when I assured him that, whatever he chose to communicate to me, would only be given to you, and that names would not be used so as to hurt him in the smallest; he then stated that he did a very large trade with continental houses, and when he said that the one already referred to consumed more fine yarns than Messrs. —— of this city, that he was considerably below the mark, and that it is only the finer numbers which they purchase in this market, as No. 100 or 110, and all under are spun in Switzerland, and sold at such prices as to prevent competition from this market. Mr. —— is only one of many who does a large trade in buying cotton yarns for foreign houses.

"I beg to subjoin the names of two gentlemen, who, I think, can give you much valuable information as to what is doing on the continent in cotton goods.

"I have the honour to be, sir,
"Your most obedient servant,

"To J. C. Symons, esq." (signed) "*David Wilson*,"

From my respected friend, Edmund Ashworth, esq., of Egerton, near Bolton, I have just received a letter, from which I will venture to insert an extract here:

"I have recently had one of the largest cotton-spinners in France visiting with me here, and we had a deal of conversation on the subject of the respective advantages and disadvantages of this Kingdom and the continent; it is too lengthy a subject for a letter, but the result is, that we in England excel in all our mercantile arrangements, but on the continent wages are so much lower, and our machinery so readily obtained, that they are beating us in the cheapness of production, and are rapidly increasing in quantity. * * *

"I remain thine respectfully,

"Egerton, near Bolton, "*Edmund Ashworth*."
8th Month 8th day, 1838."

The fact that the woollen manufactures of Scotland have escaped from the depressing tendency of the corn-laws, is of course no proof that that tendency does not exist, provided it can be shown that there are counteracting circumstances which have in this particular case, as in some others, overcome the depreciating influence: this is unquestionably the fact. The fabrics of east Scotland are of a peculiar description, and many of them are not made any where else, though probably ere long they will. There is a greatly increased demand, owing, perhaps, to fashions for woollen goods. Then, again, the material is dearer than cotton; and this, perhaps, has a tendency in warding off competing speculators with small capital. Some of these causes are probably temporary, but they amply account for the supply being limited in proportion to the demand; and hence a cause of profit sufficiently strong to withstand the effect of the corn-laws. More especially because in these Scotch woollens foreigners are unable to compete with us; and therefore *a larger proportion* of the limited amount of foreign commodities the corn-laws allow to come in, seek to exchange with Scotch woollens, than Scotch cottons.

English Engineers abroad.

It appears that several engineers of skill have been induced to leave Scotland, for the purpose of assisting in the erection and superintendence of foreign factories; among several others, a Mr. Atherton has gone over to Belgium, and is engaged there, at a salary of 800 *l.* per annum, for this purpose. He recently returned to Glasgow, and took back with him three superior engineers, at salaries of 300 *l.* per annum.

Thus the corn-laws are alleged to bear both directly and indirectly on the hand-loom weaver; directly, by the diminution of the demand for the produce of his own loom in foreign countries; and indirectly, by the same depreciation in power-loom products, which also affect him by the increase of unemployed labour, of which the hand-loom is so often the receptacle.

Competition among manufacturers.

A considerable portion of the weavers, and especially at Glasgow, allege, that the depression is greatly owing to the undue competition among manufacturers,

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and their desire to undersell each other, by means of reducing wages; and various instances are cited by them of such conduct, particularly a competition between the houses of Messrs. Hutchison, and Messrs. Perston, in 1826, by which, wages were reduced to the extent of from 30 to 40 per cent. That this reckless spirit of competition exists, there seems no question, and it has been the immediate means of reducing wages; because, and only because, the real demand for labour is not sufficient for the number of labourers seeking employment.

It is not easy to convince some of the less educated weavers that there are too many hands in the trade; because, they contend, that there is generally plenty of work to be had. They cannot see that the large amount of goods manufactured is in itself an effect of that very excess of labourers, of the non-existence of which they cite it as a proof.

The excess of labourers over the natural demand, lowers wages, or, what is the same thing, enables manufacturers to lower them. This causes a fall in the price of goods, and an increased consumption of them; the increased consumption invites new speculators into the trade, and the work is increased, but not the wages.

As to the competition among the manufacturers, it would of course raise wages, if there were few labourers; as there are, on the contrary, too many, it lowers them, or, more correctly speaking, generates competition among weavers to get work, which produces the effect of low wages.

"Small Corks."

It appears, that the reductions are usually caused by a class of manufacturers termed "small corks," who are recently risen from being weavers, and employ from four or five, to as many as two hundred weavers on their own account; selling their goods not in the regular market, but to cash warehouses and commission agents. This class of manufacturers have increased of late to an immense extent. They introduce various ingenious trickeries into their webs, which diminish the cost of production, without being discernible to any but the most practised eye. Such as over-wefting the folds of the cloth, which lie uppermost in the web, and especially at the gold end, which is most exposed to view. In some cases they have the reeds made finer at one end, to save the warp, &c.

Their goods are generally sold cheaper, and, after careful investigation of this point, I am compelled to believe, that though there may be many exceptions among them, that the majority of these small manufacturers purchase stolen weft.

Stealing Weft.

That the embezzlement of weft is carried on to a very considerable extent, there appears no question; it is stolen by factory girls from the mills, from the warehouses by the persons employed in them, and in a great measure by the women who wind pirns, and to whom it seems too great a temptation to be resisted to dispose of a spindle of weft.

The persons who are at the head of this traffic, reside chiefly in Belfast, and in Bridgeton, and the Salt-market in Glasgow. They employ a number of women and hawkers, who tramp up and down the whole of the western counties, and, wherever there are cotton weaving districts, under the pretence of selling crockery or bowls; hence the term "bowl-weft," and "bowl-corks."

The demoralisation caused by this system is widely spread, and pernicious to a degree, which it is not easy to exaggerate. The weavers at large admit, and sorely lament this evil; they suffer from it in all ways; for their webs are, in the first place, frequently fined for being too thin; and their wages lowered in the second; because the small manufacturer is, by the low price at which he can buy the stolen material, enabled to undersell the regular manufacturer. It is thus a double robbery of the weaver, the winder of the pirns usually spending the produce of the weft she sells. The police officers, and even certain superintendents of police, are more than suspected of compromising these cases of theft for money.

Houses in a very large way of business deal almost exclusively with these small manufacturers; one house in particular, both in the retail and wholesale trade, who formerly manufactured their own goods, having found it impossible to make them so cheaply as they could buy them ready made from the small manufacturers, have for the last few years dealt exclusively with them, and have abandoned manufacturing altogether.

Agents.

The agents who are employed by the manufacturers in country places to give out work and return it to them, often exercise great tyranny over the weavers; by

by keeping shops, and only giving employment to those who purchase their goods after paying them in kind.

They frequently obtain agencies from the manufacturers, by offers of getting the work done cheaply, and are thus not unfrequently the means of reducing wages. At Maybole and Ayr they are particularly oppressive to the weavers. They sometimes cut out the name of the manufacturer from the tickets, in order to conceal from one another by whom they are employed, fearing lest other agents should underbid them, and sometimes with a view of preventing the weaver from detecting their occasional practice of giving out webs on their own account, of which they have stolen the weft from their employers, fining the weaver not unfrequently into the bargain for the thinness of their webs, occasioned by their own thefts.

The manufacturers are not sufficiently scrupulous as to the character of the agents they employ: of course there are many of that body who are nevertheless men of the highest integrity.

Having now endeavoured to give a summary of the chief alleged causes of the depressed state of the weavers, I shall conclude this branch of the subject with selections from the various evidence bearing upon it, both oral and documentary; reserving the evidence of three of the chief deponents to be inserted entire in Appendix (A.), and which is not capable of being divided without injury.

EVIDENCE.

Mr. *Thomas Barr*, weaver, Glasgow—"Thinks the corn-laws the great cause of all depression in trade. Believes that slackness of demand is owing to the taxation and protecting duties imposed by Government; and that there are no other causes of depression."

Mr. *Hamilton Pringle*, weaver, Glasgow—"Thinks foreigners would buy more of our manufactures, if their corn was admitted free of duty into this country; that cheap bread would enable the hand-loom weavers to withstand the competition of power-looms, although, perhaps, the repeal of the corn-laws might still further increase the power-looms: does not think that the manufacturers would reduce the rate of wages in consequence of cheap bread; thinks that it is not the disposition of the manufacturer to take to themselves the whole profit arising from the cheapening of bread; and that the better market afforded for their own goods, would not render it necessary for them to reduce wages. Thinks all restrictions and taxes on trade bad in their general effects.

"Would be glad to get other employment if he could; thinks the combinations among other trades is a cause why hand-loom weavers cannot obtain employment in them. Thinks other trades are fully justified in protecting their own trade.

"Hand-loom weavers have not the power to combine."

Mr. *Robert Lang*, weaver, Glasgow—"Primary cause of all, is want of a due representation of the people in Parliament; and that therefore laws are kept in force which are for the benefit of the few, instead of the many.

"Believes that home competition is a cause, because the masters have admitted that they would not have reduced wages, but because they were obliged to follow the rate of reduction by others. Cannot state that such competition continues at this time.

"Corn-laws and unsound currency are among the chief causes; in fact a whole system distinctly adapted to fleece the masses. The corn-laws are the chief cause of the progress of foreign competition.

"Thinks that weavers would only bring down other classes to their own level, and do no good to themselves, by getting into better paid employment, or rather, that it would not effect the weaving body materially, as they are far too numerous."

Mr. *William Stirling*, foreman to Messrs. James Hutchison & Co., manufacturers, Glasgow, states—"He believes, that had not weavers been too plentiful, the Perston & Hutchison competition could not have taken place. At the very lowest period of wages, applications were made for work at lower prices still. Webs are constantly giving out at lower prices than other houses, owing again to excess of hands.

"Embezzlement is carried on to a very considerable extent. Had one weaver who got the usual quantity of weft as other weavers, who through time, saved as much

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much weft as made a web, without his being detected. Thinks that from 2½ to 3 spindles might be pilfered from 30 spindles. Gives out to agents weft sufficient for the webs at once, which is marked on the ticket.

" Some years ago had an agent who made a regular trade of keeping up weft, at the same time charging the weavers for making their work; this person was ultimately detected, and made to refund considerably to the weavers. Does not know who purchases the stolen weft; thinks it must be the worst class of 'bowl corks;' 20 splits is the outside that could be taken off the width of a web without detection, if a foreman does his duty."

Mr. *Thomas Yule*, weaver, Glasgow, states—" That one great cause is competition among manufacturers; that the corn-laws are a great evil, and cause of depression; ever since they made the alteration in 1815, trade has decreased.

" Does not think that the combinations prevent transition to other employment. Contends that there is too many hands."

Mr. *James Scott*, journeyman weaver, Glasgow—" Attributes to home competition, more than to any other cause; gave in two tickets, showing different prices paid by two Glasgow houses, viz. Messrs. James Davidson, Son & Co., and William Church & Co., of which the following are copies; from these tickets wished to prove the competition now existing among the manufacturers of Glasgow, and its effects in reducing wages.

" ' No. 575.

' 147 ells, 13 hundred, 9/8 lawn.
' 18 pieces, 8 1/6 ells each.
' 382.

' 75 porters, splits, selvage, 5 splits, 11 twists, 3 in the inside split, weaving 2 ⅞ *d.* per ell; winding 1 ½ per spil. Weft to count 13 shots; ornament, 9 shots of gold 11 ½ inches through; 9 shots in the bass.

' The first piece of the web to be brought in as soon as finished; and if the whole of the web be not returned finished within weeks of this date, will be deducted for each week it is kept longer, except in case of sickness. Deductions will be made for every kind of bad work. The cloth must be well picked; left weft, gold and empty bobbins to be returned.

' Glasgow, *James Davidson*, Son & Co.
26 January 1838. 182 pins, J. D. 22, South Frederick-street.

' *N. B.*—No service after 12 o'clock on Saturday, 2 on other days, nor without this ticket. No service on Tuesday.' "

" ' A. M'Millan, Glasgow, No. 2,873, March 14, 1838.

' No. 4,470. No service on Tuesdays, nor before 12 on Mondays and Wednesdays, nor after 2 on Saturdays.

' 146 ¼ ells, 13^{00} 9/8 lawn, 75^{15} porters, pins; 18 pieces cut at 8 ⅛ ells, to produce 10 yards of 37 inches. To count 14 shots out of the loom, or one half-penny per ell will be stopped for each shot wanting; 10 shots of gold 11 inches through. The cloth to be returned in a workmanlike manner, or proportional deductions will be made. To be finished in six weeks, or forfeit 2*s.* for each week longer. The reed and left weft must be returned before the web is balanced; the loose ends of wheep must be cut off the ends of the pieces.

' Weaving, 2*d.* per ell. Nos. 116. 38 spls.—12.
' Winding, 1¼*d.* per spindle.

' *W^m Church* & Co., South Exchange Court.' "

Thus ⅞*d.* more per ell was paid for the former web, though the work was the same.

Being asked why, when a low-priced ticket was offered to him, he did not, instead of taking it, apply to the best paying manufacturer? replied, " that he might apply, but that it would be useless; because the high paying manufacturer might have all his work out, and none to give, and would be thus forced to take the lowest-priced ticket."

Mr. *James Shearer*, weaver, Glasgow, states—" That the corn-laws were the first great cause of depression. Exports of manufactures would have been much greater, could foreign corn have been taken in return.

" Home competition also has contributed to the reduction of the rate of wages.

" Attributes a great deal to the 'small corks;' the great manufacturers tell the weaver, that they are forced to lower wages on account of the inferior webs that are poured into the market by the cash warehouses, and which undersell their goods."

Mr.

Mr. *John M'Nairney*, weaver, Glasgow, states—" That great evil attaches to the cash-houses, because the webs are bought at low prices; for the weaver must sell, and cannot afford to wait for his money; so that these goods come into the market, and undersell the large manufacturers, thus reducing the rate of prices, and of wages as a consequence.

" The weavers who buy the materials, and weave the webs (either by themselves, or journeymen) to sell at the cash-houses, are called 'small corks;' and often appoint to pay the men they employ, at public-houses, where the workmen wait till the money is brought them.

" This system often leads men to drink, when they would not otherwise do so.

" Thinks manufacturers did much injury by exporting bad coloured goods.

" That the excess of Irish labour, leads to lower wages. A measure bettering the condition of the Irish labourer in his own country, might be a remedy."

Thomas Davidson, esq., manufacturer, Glasgow—" Thinks competition among masters is a cause which has always been going on, and still is in operation.

" Is of opinion, that the continental produce of fabrics generally woven by hand-looms in this country, is considerably on the increase, and is narrowing the market for our own goods, thus tending to the depression of hand-loom weavers.

" Is confident that the duties on foreign grain have materially tended to prevent the foreigners from purchasing our goods. Believes the manufactured articles formerly exported from hence to the ports of the Baltic, amounted to four millions, where they now amount only to as many hundred thousands.

" Thinks that a rigid system of exclusion, by means of combinations in some other trades, partly prevent weavers from obtaining better employment; but believes that the grown-up weavers are not generally qualified for certain skilled branches of employment, and that for some, such as iron-moulders and machine makers, they are not physically adapted.

" As regards the children, weavers are, for the most part, unable to afford the loss of their services in their own business, at such an early age as would precede the time at which they would be apprenticed; and even after that, is of opinion, that the weavers think it more profitable to keep their sons in their own employment, than to apprentice them to another trade. Thinks also the fee in the indenture of apprentices is another barrier; that the combinations in other trades prevent the apprenticeship of hand-loom weavers' children to some extent.

" Believes a cheaper sort of goods is manufactured extensively with stolen weft, which, entering into the market at lower prices than the goods regularly made, has had the effect of reducing the price of those regular goods, and the rate of wages generally given by the regular manufacturer."

Mr. *William Maccimmey*, weaver, Glasgow—" Believes a large quantity of weft is embezzled by the agents in the country. If manufacturers were in the habit of making out their own tickets to the agents, and stating the quantity of weft allowed for each web, and the number of shots required, this would form a check, which does not now exist, as the agents are generally allowed to fill them up themselves, and the weavers are often fined when the web is too thin, although enough of weft has not been given him. The weft is sold by the agent, partly to large houses in Glasgow, who sell it again, both to 'small corks,' and some of the manufacturers, who have regular warehouses. Believes it is carried on in factories also by girls stealing from one another; and the system is, in his opinion, affecting the morals generally of the poor classes. That it is not only by embezzlement that the 'bowl-corks' are enabled to sell their goods so much cheaper, but believes that a great number of them practise deception in weaving the webs; 1st, by wefting the upper sides of the folds more thickly than the under side, which is not usually examined; and, 2dly, by making the reed itself finer on one part than another.

" That the 'bowl-corks' are not the persons who reap the profit, but the cash-houses."

Mr. *James Gordon*, weaver, Glasgow—" Thinks the power-looms made inroads on many branches of the hand-loom weaving, which has thrown men upon many of the existing hand-loom fabrics.

" Believes competition, principally as regards the houses of Messrs. Hutchison, has been the cause of reducing the rate of wages.

" Believes embezzlement of weft is done to a great extent, and affects prices; that it is done by agents, and in factories chiefly. Thinks the winders of pirns

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may steal, but not the weavers themselves; they have not the means of doing so. Believes there is a good deal stolen from dye-houses. There is a house in Dale-street, Bridgeton, where it is sent from, to Ireland, in large quantities packed in bales.

" Weavers cannot afford to apprentice their children to other trades, owing to their poverty, and because they cannot spare the time. Weaving is considered as a stigma now.

" Combinations have been partly the cause of preventing transition from weaving. Weavers could only go to other trades, in some cases, at the risk of their lives."

Graham Hutchison, esq., manufacturer, states—" That competition among manufacturers can have no permanent influence in either raising or depressing the wages of hand-loom weavers above or below their natural level, because it can have no permanent influence in altering the relation subsisting between the supply of weavers and the demand for them, which is in every case the efficient cause in regulating and determining the amount of their wages. In April 1829 the combination forced up the wages paid by the regular manufacturers in the plain muslin line, (and in that line only), about 45 per cent. above what they had previously been, and of course about 45 per cent. above their natural level. The consequence was, that bowl-cork weaving, and the trade of weavers purchasing manufacturing materials themselves, and selling the cloth to the purchasers of goods, rapidly extended, while that of manufacturing according to the regular method, as rapidly diminished. Had the combination remained effective, the regular manufacturers would soon have been driven out of the trade, and superseded by the purchasers of goods from bowl-corks and weavers. The manufacturers, however, (beginning with the smaller ones), in order to defend their trade, before many months passed over, set the combination at defiance, and began to offer work to weavers below the table price fixed by the weavers' combination. This work was readily taken out by the weavers, because the wages paid by the regular manufacturers at that reduced price was higher than what they could obtain from the bowl-cork manufacturers, or than what they could make by supplying themselves with manufacturing materials, and selling their cloth to the purchasers of goods. The combination of course ceased to be effective, and in fact was entirely broken up. At this time the reduction of wages, occasioned by what has been called the competition of manufacturers, took place. A certain extensive manufacturer who had ingratiated himself with some of the weavers' delegates, adopted, as a plan of reducing his wages, the paying of country prices to Glasgow weavers, contrary to the practice which he himself, and all other Glasgow manufacturers, had in all times previously and subsequently adopted. This manufacturer happened at that time to have few or no country weavers; the consequence was, that the regular manufacturers followed every reduction he made in wages in Glasgow, keeping exactly the same difference as formerly, viz. half a set between the country and town's prices, that being considered the difference in the value of work done through agents in the country and in the town. The effect produced was, that one reduction took place after another, till the wages paid by the regular manufacturers fell to about their natural level, viz. the price paid anterior to the previous April, when the prices were forced up by the combination. Very shortly after they reached this level, the manufacturer who had adopted the plan of paying Irvine prices to Glasgow weavers, was told he might continue it if he could; but this he found he was not able to do, as the other manufacturers were ready to take up all his hands at Glasgow prices (which were half a set above Irvine prices), the moment they could get them.

" That the reduction of wages which took place on this occasion was not owing, strictly speaking, to the supposed competition among manufacturers, but to the return of wages to their natural level, is evident from the following facts:

" 1st. Weaving prices fell only in the same proportion as they had risen the previous month of April, when forced up by the combination. 2d. The principle of reduction adopted by the manufacturer of paying Irvine prices to Glasgow weavers could not be maintained, and had to be abandoned when wages fell to their former level, for otherwise he would have lost all his Glasgow weavers by other manufacturers taking them, or had he persisted in reducing their wages to Irvine prices. 3d. The wages paid in all other lines of manufacturing, except the

the plain muslin line (and which was the only department in which wages were forced up by the combination) remained steady, or nearly steady, throughout the year. 4th. When there is a scarcity of workmen relative to the demand for them, there is a competition among manufacturers to get them, and the mode of competition is to raise the price offered one above another; on the contrary, when the supply of workmen is greater than the demand, it is an abuse of language to say that manufacturers compete for them; it is the workmen who then compete for employment, by working lower than each other; and it need hardly be added, that every reduction of wages, by reducing the cost and selling price of goods, increases both the demand for workmen and the consumption of goods; and every advance of wages, by increasing the cost and selling price of goods, diminishes both the demand for workmen and the consumption of goods.

Combinations of hand-loom weavers have had the effect of raising their wages hitherto only for a very limited time, and to a small extent, in comparison with the influence of combinations in other trades. The reasons for this are as follow:

1st. Hand-loom weavers are very much scattered over the country, and work individually in their own shops, instead of being congregated in factories; this renders it more difficult for them to combine.

2d. Owing to the master-manufacturers having no money sunk in factories, they find little difficulty in transferring their work from places where they are combined, and where wages are thereby raised above their natural level, to those where they are not.

3d. The most effective check, however, to the influence of combinations of hand-loom weavers in forcing up and in maintaining wages above their natural level, is the effect that every such forced advance has in throwing weavers out of employment, and in compelling them, in order to gain a livelihood, either to take webs from bowl-cork manufacturers, or to purchase for themselves manufacturing materials, which, after weaving into cloth, they sell to the purchasers of goods, and thus in reality evade the combination prices, and work at wages not raised in the slightest degree above their natural level; even the moderate advance in wages which the short-lived combinations of hand-loom weavers have hitherto produced, have had the effect of so extending the trade of bowl-cork manufacturing, and of weavers working for themselves and selling the cloth to the purchasers of goods, that from one-third to one-half of all the plain muslins with which the Glasgow market is now supplied, is furnished in this manner; whereas before combinations of hand-loom weavers existed, it may be estimated that not above one-twentieth part of these goods were so supplied; and it is evident that if the wages of the hand-loom weavers were to be raised for any length of time above their natural level, either by combinations or by any board of trade regulations, the regular manufacturers would be unable to compete in the market with the purchasers of goods, and, consequently, would be compelled to give up regular manufacturing, and also to become purchasers of goods from weavers and bowl-corks. The wages of hand-loom weavers cannot be permanently raised either by combinations or by boards of trade, because such can have no permanent influence in limiting or reducing the supply of hand-loom weavers relative to the demand for them. If the condition of hand-loom weavers be such as to encourage an increase of their numbers without a proportional increased demand for their labour, it is just as impossible permanently to raise their wages above their natural level, either by combinations or board of trade regulations, as it would be permanently to dam up the waters of a running stream.

Mr. *Hugh Mackenzie*, weaver, Glasgow, gave in the following statement with regard to undue competition among manufacturers:—

"In June 1834 the house of James Hutchison & Co., on the face of a brisk trade, sent orders to their agents in Hamilton to reduce the price of weaving one *full set*, which might be about 10 per cent. The weavers of that place, being much alarmed at the circumstance, as it had the immediate effect of pulling down all other houses who had work going there, to the *same standard*, sent down a deputation to remonstrate. Mr. Graham Hutchison, one of the partners, did not justify himself on the necessity of so doing on account of the state of the market;

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but *boldly averred* that it was because he could get the work cheaper done elsewhere. He told them they had his answer; the thing was settled; and he had nothing farther to say on the subject. It was in vain that the deputation represented the evil consequences, and that all other manufacturers following in his wake, entailed unnecessary evil upon a great portion of the community. They were retiring very much cast down with the result of the interview, when Mr. Hutchison observed, 'Yes, by-the-bye, I observe by to-day's papers that a Committee is appointed in Parliament to inquire into the case of the hand-loom weavers.' 'Yes,' said one of the deputation, 'and this very instance of your *arbitrary* reduction of wages without cause, will be a precious argument in the mouth of our witnesses to prove the necessity of establishing a board of trade.' The observation told like a stroke of electricity. The two brothers exchanged a significant glance across the desk, and the deputation retired. It was not, however, an hour when one of the foremen was dispatched after them, and informed them that the prices were *again restored*; but much evil was already done, for the other manufacturers would not believe the circumstance, and it cost no little labour and lost time on the part of the weaver to convince them. You will, sir, immediately perceive from this, that there was no necessity at the time for the reduction, *else the prices would not have been restored.* It was mere cupidity, and one manufacturer had it in his power, and has still the power, of bringing down all Glasgow.

"Myself was one of the deputation present, and bear testimony to the above fact.

"I am, sir, your obedient servant,

"*Hugh Mackenzie.*"

"To J. C. Symons, esq., Commissioner for the Hand-loom Weavers' Inquiry for Scotland."

Francis Finlayson, esq., manufacturer, Glasgow, states—"As a proof that embezzlement is carried on to a considerable degree, that he was in the beginning of 1836 in a respectable house, doing a deal of business in the country trade (he believes upwards of 200,000 *l.* a year), when goods were shown to him, consisting of handkerchiefs or pullicates, and he was told that if he could manufacture them at the same price as stated in the invoice shown to him, he should receive a very large order. The price stated in said invoice was 4*s.* 8*d.* per dozen. Witness went home, and calculated what it would cost him to produce similar goods; when he found that the price of yarns and weaving alone would amount to 5*s.* 2*d.* Witness buys his own yarns as cheaply as possible. In the above estimate of price at which witness could produce these goods, no allowance was included for the item of house-rent, payments of servants, &c.

"Made his calculation on the estimate of a web of the exact same quality in every respect as the one shown to him; is certain that the web shown to him at the low price, was not woven for charitable purposes, and that the lowness of price cannot be accounted for in this way; and witness's impression is, that the weft employed in weaving this low-priced article could not be honestly come by.

"Had this been a single transaction, witness thinks the goods might have been disposed of with a view of getting ready money; but he affirms, on the contrary, that these goods were regularly sold to the house in question. Is sure at the time, namely, at the beginning of 1836, no regular manufacturer was producing goods of the same description at less than the estimate he made himself, namely 5*s.* 2*d.* per dozen; thinks the same system prevails still.

"Prices have since fallen in this department, and witness thinks that the fall in coarse qualities of pullicates is partly owing to such transactions as above described.

"Hears, but cannot speak of his own authority, that large quantities of stolen wefts come here regularly from Hamilton.

"Thinks that the women who wind the pirns are in the habit of embezzling a portion of the weft, in spite of the check which the manufacturer is enabled to exercise over the weaver when the weft he supplies falls short.

"Thinks weft cannot be stolen from factories in the same amount."

Bailie *Campbell*, merchant, Glasgow, states—"That two houses purchasing goods in the grey from 'small corks,' purchased to the amount, the one 179,889 pieces,

pieces, and the other 109,084 pieces; and that there were other two houses partially in that trade who purchase from 'small corks,' the one, 45,192, and the other, 130,972 pieces annually. There are many other houses in the same line equally large.

"That he believes the webs in question to be sold at a somewhat less rate, generally speaking, than by the regular manufacturers, and also that these webs are of a more saleable quality, though not of equal intrinsic value. Attributes this cheapness, in a great measure, to additional superintendence on the part of the 'small cork,' and to his experience in the mode by which webs may be rendered more saleable at the smallest cost. Finds that upwards of 60 houses are in the habit of dealing with the 'small corks,' these houses being, for the most part, first rate.

"Believes that a sufficient quantity of weft cannot be stolen to affect the prices in the market, more especially as the quantity manufactured in this neighbourhood by the small manufacturers exceeds that by the regular ones.

"Occasionally, owing to a particular demand, higher prices are paid for the webs of the small corks, than the regular manufacturer.

"Has heard that weft has been exported to Ireland; states as a proof that yarn is stolen from factories, that three girls were brought before him as a magistrate at the police office, who had been detected in secreting yarn to the value of 14*s*. 6*d*. on their persons, by means of having double petticoats sewed together at the bottom.

"This quantity they had brought away at one time from the mill.

"Does not think that an entire stock, under common circumstances, is sold by the 'small corks' at so much as 10 per cent. less than by the regular manufacturer."

James Black, esq., manufacturer, Glasgow—"Believes the goods manufactured by the 'bowl-corks' are compared with similar goods made by regular manufacturers decidedly inferior; they are, however, bleached and starched with at least equal care as the regular goods.

"The effect of this system is, that the purchaser ultimately discovers the deception, and thus the Glasgow trade suffers in credit. Is sure that such goods are sold at a much less price than the webs made by the regular manufacturer.

"Thinks that as the 'bowl-corks' cannot have that advantage in the economy of his yarn possessed by the wholesale manufacturer, that the advantages of immediately superintending the work, and lesser rents and salaries to pay, do not account for the whole difference between the price of his webs and the manufacturers. Thinks also, that where the 'bowl-cork' employs an agent, he manufactures at no advantage at all. Is therefore of opinion, that the yarn frequently used by the 'bowl-corks' cannot be fairly come by. Is enabled to prove, by instances that have come under his own knowledge, that the stealing of weft is carried on to a very large extent, and that the existing laws are totally inefficient to prevent it.

"Thinks that the purchasers of webs have not the means of positively knowing, from the price at which they are sold, whether the materials have been honestly come by or not. Thinks the small corks often oppress their workmen, and by various means get them to take lower wages than other manufacturers.

Captain *Jeffrey*, superintendent of the Gorbals Police, states—"That he believes the embezzlement of weft to be still carried on to a very great extent. That the amount stolen is sufficiently great to affect the prices in the market. That the stolen weft is woven principally by the 'bowl-corks,' and that it is sold even to some of the first houses in Glasgow, who, in some instances, consistent with his knowledge, purchase it at 10 per cent. less price than from the regular manufacturer.

"Believes this to be one of the greatest evils existing in Glasgow, but that the laws require to be made more rigorous and effective, and that a police force should be appropriated to the exclusive duty of suppressing it.

"The law to enable the police to apprehend persons during the day with

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stolen property upon them, and also to search their premises at night, which cannot now be done, however strong the certainty that stolen weft is there.

" The greater part of this traffic is carried on at night.

" Is decidedly of opinion that an amendment of the present Act 17 Geo. 3, c. 56, is urgently required for the above purpose."

William Craig, esq., merchant, Glasgow, states—" That he is of opinion that a great part of the evil is to be traced to the duties on foreign corn, which prevent its introduction here, and consequently prevent that increased produce of home manufactures, which must necessarily take place for the repayment of such foreign corn, were it freely imported.

" Also believes that, by the exclusion from England of foreign corn, other countries, where corn is plentiful, are compelled to manufacture goods for themselves, which they would buy of us instead, if we took their corn in return.

" Thinks that the labourer would be benefited likewise by cheaper bread, and that such would be the increase of manufactures, that the employers would, owing to the greater demand for labour, not reduce the rate of wages to the extent to which bread would fall in price.

" Thinks the agricultural labourers would not suffer from a repeal of the corn-laws, because they would be more profitably employed in laying down in pasture and dairy farms inferior land, now tilled, and in entering upon the increased occupation afforded by manufacturers.

" Thinks that an additional advantage would accrue to British workmen from the effect which an increased demand for foreign corn would have in raising its price abroad, equalizing the price of bread here and there, and thus compelling the rate of wages to rise in those foreign countries where the low rate of wages now gives them an advantage in competing with British industry.

" Corroborates the evidence of Captain Jeffrey, and adds, that he believes large quantities of stolen weft to be exported from hence to Ireland; and recommends that officers be appointed by Government to watch, especially at the ports in the north of Ireland, for these stolen goods. Believes the present custom-house force at the Irish ports are not efficient for this purpose."

Thomas Neil, esq., manufacturer, Kilmarnock—" Considers wages to depend entirely upon the proportion between the demand for and supply of labour; considers the corn-laws prejudicial to the interests of the country, although they have not affected the North American market.

" Woollen trade is better than others, chiefly because there is less competition among manufacturers. Table of prices agreed to in 1833; little or no competition consequently in this branch.

" Unions prevent easy access to other employment. Necessity of making the most of the labour of the children at an early age.

" Embezzlement is done to a considerable extent, chiefly by the winders of pirns; weavers seldom know any thing of it. Women generally sell the yarn to the ' small corks,' who manufacture it, and afterwards sell the goods to regular manufacturers, by giving the weft out by weight, the manufacturers are perfectly able to detect the stealing of weft; but it is so generally done, that the manufacturers are obliged to put up with it, and fine certain bad cases, for example, 20 per cent.

The *Provost* of Kilmarnock states—" That two cases of embezzlement have been convicted this week, both residing in the parish of Fenwick; finds great difficulty in procuring evidence; those who purchased it were private individuals, said to be decent people buying it for their own use in customer weaving; the offenders were fined in a mitigated penalty.

" Some of the ' small corks ' here are respectable men; the goods they produce usually sold at lower prices.

" An association of manufacturers, agents and weavers, now exists for putting an end to the traffic of embezzlement."

[*N. B.*—The weft above alluded to was produced in Court, together with the goods, coarse blankets, which had been seized by the police, and which was stolen from a factory, the master of which laid the information.]

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John Ker, esq., manufacturer, Glasgow, states—" The cause of the gradual and great decline in the rates of hand-loom weaving is owing to two causes: the competition of weaving by steam-power, and of foreign manufactures. From the cheapness of power-loom cloth, they are now substituted for many descriptions which were formerly and could only be done by the hand, whilst the Continental hand-loom manufacturers have successively beat us out of their own markets, and now successfully compete with us in all free foreign ones: the Turkey red goods made in Rouen, have for years given us hurtful opposition in Manilla, and the Turkey red goods of Belgian and Dutch manufacture now supply the important market of Java. In this manufacture, so important to Glasgow, the continental manufacturers, from having the madder and oil, are enabled to produce their colours cheaper, whilst their climate gives a bright colour (we bring it here, though subject to duties): our only security is cheap labour; and when we compare the price of bread in the different countries, it must be satisfactorily shown to the Commission, that we hold this and many other branches of hand-loom weaving by a very slender tenure."

REMEDIES.

Repeal of Corn laws.

The only measure desired by the weavers, or advocated by the manufacturers, as a sufficient remedy for the existing depression, is the repeal of the corn-laws. Other measures have been deemed desirable as palliatives of their condition, but I am bound distinctly to state, that the weavers in my district will be satisfied with nothing short of a total repeal of the duties on the importation of foreign corn; they view the continuance of a tax which increases the price of food, and diminishes the amount of employment, as grievous and intolerable, irreconcileable with sound policy, and obnoxious to every principle of justice. Such, though expressed in terms less mild, was the feeling I found unanimous among the weaving body of Scotland south of the Forth, and I may safely say that their opinions on this point are the same as those held by nine-tenths of the population comprising a large majority of the manufacturers.

They consider that a greater injury would accrue to the farmer by the maintenance of a tax detrimental to the community than by its removal; and in this opinion they are supported by the testimony of more than one intelligent and extensive agriculturist; among others, Mr. Smith, of Dumfries.

They believe that the greater consumption of the produce of dairy farms, and pasture and building lands, and barley, would amply compensate to the farmer for the fall in the price of one grain; but that if it did not, that no justifiable plea could be thereupon founded for the continuation of a monopoly beneficial to the individual interests of a minority, but hurtful to the national interests of the community.

Anxious, nevertheless, that no injury should accrue to any class, the majority of the weavers desire a gradual, but still a total repeal of the corn-tax, on the principle of a fall of one or two shillings per year, which will give time to the landlords and their tenants to re-adjust their leases, and to lay down tillage-lands in pasture.

There are, however, many who contend, that if the injury of the corn-laws be great, their removal cannot be too immediate. Mr. Smith, of Deanston, near Doune, (celebrated alike as an agriculturist and a manufacturer), told me, he considered that if the corn-laws could not be maintained (and he reluctantly assented to the probable necessity of a repeal), that the true interest of the farmer was, that such repeal should be immediate, and *not gradual*. He believed that the same mutual agreement which after a time re-adjusted existing contracts between landlords and tenants, would take place as after the war, and that the inconveniences of a sudden change would be less than the evil to the farmer of feeling his protective duty gradually and insidiously, as it were, sinking beneath him, the effects of which he could less easily calculate and act upon than those of immediate repeal.

Fallacy of supposing Repeal can lower Wages.

Neither the weavers nor the manufacturers apprehend a reduction of wages commensurate with the fall in price of food. It is held, that the extra quantity of our manufactures required to repay the corn purchased of the foreigner, would increase the demand for, and consequently the wages of labour. It is also considered that if an additional quantity of food on the aggregate be introduced

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into the country, it is a necessary consequence that the labourer must be benefited, seeing that people above his rank in life cannot consume more than they already do, and that the additional food must fall to the poor.

The doctrine that gold may go abroad, instead of our goods, to repay foreign corn, is of course answered by the fact that the rate of exchange is immediately affected; that gold becomes plentiful abroad, and prices high; that gold becomes scarce here, and prices low; that Great Britain becomes the most profitable market to purchase in, and therefore the one in which foreigners will necessarily purchase, and that the gold returns again.

Thus the same result follows, viz., that the British goods go abroad to repay foreign corn, and the gold which it is presumed would go abroad, goes there merely as the representative of British cottons or cutlery.

The alleged necessity of securing reciprocity before we remit protecting duties, is also considered fallacious: there is no other possible means whereby nations can pay each other than by their respective commodities; gold and bills being merely their representatives. If, therefore, foreigners having sold us their goods, persist in making difficulties to receiving the only payment they can get, that is their affair, and not ours. If it be contended that foreigners, foreseeing this, and not choosing to take our goods, refuse to sell us theirs, then at any rate no harm can be done by removing prohibitive duties, which prohibit only what, under this assumption, will not come, whether we prohibit them or not.

Intelligence of the Weavers, and their pleasure in being treated as rational beings.

On all these points, I found generally a good understanding among the Scottish weavers. Their political economy is generally sound, and I invariably made them support all their desired measures by their own arguments; afterwards following your instructions, when occasion required, to explain to them their errors, and to endeavour to remove prejudice or ignorance by patient and temperate discussion; and I may here remark, that no portion of my duties was met with a more kindly and gratified feeling by the weavers, nor any of which the discharge was more easy or pleasing.

The surest mode of making government easy, is to convince the people that it is cognisant of their feelings, and appreciates their opinion. They who govern at the greatest distance, govern with the greatest difficulty. At any rate, I can testify that this inquiry has been accepted by the weaving body as a token of interest in their condition, which alone abstractedly deserves their gratitude; and I am confident that indifference to their feelings exasperates the working classes far more than opposition to their demands.

Boards of Trade.

Among the palliatives advocated by some of the weavers, is that of local Boards of Trade. The following is the plan suggested by the Glasgow Committee:—

Boards of Trade.

"That there shall be one general board of trade, as it is already established for the whole nation, who shall superintend all branches of business, and, as at present, to sit in London.

"That there shall be three subordinate boards, whose duty it shall be to superintend and regulate the prices of workmanship in the silk, woollen and cotton trades performed by hand weaving, also the linen trade, and every production of the loom that is not connected with power weaving, of which one shall be established in Manchester, for England; one in Glasgow, for Scotland; and the other in Belfast, for Ireland.

"That these boards shall consist of a certain number of manufacturers and weavers, who shall sit once a quarter, or at stated periods, and be empowered to regulate the rates of workmanship of each respective fabric, so that as far as possible it shall be consistent with the mutual benefit of master and workman, and the prosperity of the trade at large.

"That where any branch of manufacture is local, and confined to any of the three great districts, England, Scotland or Ireland, then that board of trade in whose jurisdiction it lies, shall have full powers to regulate the prices of weaving in that particular branch of business, independent of the other two, but subject, if thought necessary, to the review of the approbation of the central board in London. And again, when the manufactured article is alike general, and prevails over the whole nation, then the three boards, in the event that any alteration

tion in the price of workmanship should be called for, must correspond on the subject, and agree to such a rise or fall as the circumstances of the case shall require; if unanimous, the measure shall be final; if not, the decision of the majority shall be subject to the review and approbation of the central board in London.

"That the manufacturers and weavers shall respectively appoint from their own bodies the necessary numbers to constitute a board, and who shall be taken from the different districts of the jurisdiction in proportion to the quantity of manufactures carried on therein.

"That every question decided at any of the respective boards which shall have the unanimous consent of a full meeting, shall be final.

"That in the event of the votes being equally divided, the case shall be submitted to the consideration of the President of the Board of Trade in London, whose decision, as umpire, shall be final.

"That the boards, in settling the price of workmanship, shall be guided as near as possible by the data of what the manufacturers of principle and respectability could reasonably afford, without bringing the trade into jeopardy by the competition of foreign nations.

"That the prices of workmanship thus set shall not be a fixed rate, which every manufacturer shall be obliged to pay, and no more, but a minimum under which they shall not be permitted to come, leaving at all times any individual at liberty to rise as much above as it is suitable to his interest when forwarding an order, or when he wishes to increase his trade.

"That the regulations of the boards shall be binding till next sitting, and to be enforced by suitable penalties imposed on all open transgressors, and those who evade the law."

This measure is advocated chiefly at Glasgow, Airdrie, Lanark and Paisley, and the neighbourhood, and is very generally opposed throughout the rest of my district. I have, however, ground to believe that the desire for this measure originates chiefly with a comparatively small number of persons, and that no very decided feeling in its favour animates the weaving body of Scotland.

The measure is advocated on the following grounds:—1st, that a very baneful spirit of reducing wages actuates the less honourable manufacturers, which the others are forced to follow; 2d, that consequently if none could pay below what the honourable manufacturers and weavers determined to be just, according to the state of the general market, these speculators would be obliged to conform to the fixed rate; 3d, that these speculators would no longer be able to manufacture at excessively low wages, during times of stagnation, goods which are afterwards brought into the market when prices have risen, and which undersell the regular manufacturer, and prevent him, as he otherwise would, from raising the rate of wages.

On the other hand, it is maintained, that no such law would be practically effective, except when it was not wanted, seeing that, whenever there were weavers seeking employment, the less honourable manufacturers would obtain them at lower wages, and without the least possibility of incurring a penalty by the simple expedient of entering the portion they intended to deduct from the regular price in the column headed "cash paid," which by mutual agreement would not be received by the weaver; it is obvious that whenever weavers could not get work at the fixed rate, they would be compelled to prefer breaking the price in the way stated, to starving.

When trade was so good that employers were seeking workmen, it is also certain that the workmen can make their bargain without the aid of any Act of Parliament.

It is also the opinion of a large body of the weavers, that any law which should punish a man for taking what he thought fit for his labour, or attempt to force him to starve rather than take less than a junta of persons might decree, would be tyrannical. I am decidedly of opinion that the majority of the weavers in my district consider it contradictory to ask for the repeal of one sort of restriction in the corn-laws, and for the adoption of another in the shape of a minimum of wages.

Their desire, as a body, is to do away with, and not to add to, legislative trammels on commerce.

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The weavers' desire for a board of trade is of course to get that done for them by Parliament, which other trades are strong enough to do for themselves, namely, the protection of combinations. But there are two sorts of combination, and boards of trade could not rank with that class which confine themselves to the legitimate right of any body of workmen to refuse (all VOLUNTARILY agreeing) to work at lower wages than they thought just.

There are various other objections to boards of trade, both in practice and principle; but enough has been advanced to show that such a measure would prove detrimental to the interests of the workmen themselves, and the feeling in its favour, is undergoing a rapid change in Scotland.

National Education.

An extended system of national education is highly desired, but is not applicable merely as a remedy to the depressed condition of the weavers; for it is sufficiently substantiated, that until the pressure of their extreme poverty be alleviated, it is doubtful whether the weavers could spare the time essential for a good education to their children; and there are cogent causes in operation which would prevent the highest rate of intelligence from emancipating itself from the physical depression wherewith the weaving trade enthrals its victims, although, no doubt, the best informed are those who have the best facilities of escape, and have most profited by them.

But education is hailed as the richest blessing which a government can confer on a people; and the weavers heartily and unanimously desire its extension among the community at large; it is, generally speaking, to do them justice, the chief use they make of the small savings they can amass, after defraying the cost of the neeessaries of life: they who prefer spending it on spirits, are the minority, among the *parents* at least. And I do not believe, from my ample opportunities of judging, that the habit of spirit drinking, prevalent as it is among other classes, prevents in any degree worth naming the education of weavers' children.

Payment at Schools.

It is the general feeling, that a small payment should be attached to any national system of education, which enhances its value to the recipient, and does not create a pernicious approximation to pauperism. To be enabled to pay, and to pay for education, is the unanimous desire of the Scotch.

Political disfranchisement of Ignorance.

As to whether the attendance should be made voluntary or compulsory, there seems no doubt that, whilst the latter system would ill accord with the spirit of the British people, and conduce to any thing but the good will with which it is essential to its success, that the people themselves should embrace and co-operate with an educational system; still, on the other hand, considering the melancholy indisposition and positive difficulties which will frequently oppose themselves to universality of education, I believe it will be found expedient to institute, not a compulsory, but a very powerful inducement to intelligence; and this, if I may be allowed to express an opinion, I would endeavour to do, by attaching civil and political disabilities to ignorance.

Educational qualification for Apprentices.

I should, among other means, impose the necessity of a mental qualification for apprenticeship. This plan does not labour under the disadvantage of being merely speculative; it is in active and successful operation, as the following letter, which I have received from one of the most eminent of our manufacturers, amply testifies:—

"Sir, Primrose, July 30, 1838.

"I am instructed by my father, who is in the south of England, and labouring under serious indisposition, to reply to your inquiries respecting the success of our attempt to promote education amongst our work-people.

"As you appear to be informed of the general nature of our system, I conceive that a short statement of its result in practice is what you desire.

"The youngest class of children we employ, are from nine years of age to about thirteen. Of these, none are admitted to our works who cannot read and write with some degree of facility, an examination always taking place before employment is given. During the last month, upwards of twenty applications for employment have been refused, in consequence of deficiency of this qualification.

Apprentices

Apprentices in the various branches of our business, are required to read and write before they can be indentured. The usual period of indenture is from the age of 14 to 21 years. Adopted this rule upwards of twelve months ago; and they whose time of indenture was not completed when the system was commenced, received notice that their employment would be suspended at the termination of their apprenticeship, unless they had made the requisite progress in the elementary progress of education. This plan has been strictly adhered to, and has been found perfectly efficacious in enforcing the necessary qualifications.

"Every facility for acquiring instruction has been afforded by the establishment of evening schools; and with the detail of whose operation it is unnecessary to trouble you. It may suffice to say, that during two hours in the evening, and four days a week, instruction in reading, writing, arithmetic, grammar, and mensuration, is to be obtained for 2*s*. 6*d*. per quarter year.

"The effect of exacting these qualifications has been, to fill all the Sunday and evening schools of all denominations. Since the notice was given, about eighteen months ago, of our determination on this point, upwards of 500 additional scholars have been admitted to these schools. We have abundant instances of parents who are anxious to get their children admitted into our employment, securing for them previously the required degree of instruction, when it is probable every other means would have failed.

"I have the honour to be, sir,
"Your obedient servant,

"To J. C. Symons, esq." (signed) "*Thos. S. Thomson.*"

Comments on Educational Suffrage, and on Education as qualification for Apprenticeships.

On talking this plan over with Mr. Smith, of Deemston, to whose works a capital school is attached, he feared lest, by the general adoption of such a scheme, many children might be consigned to perpetual ignorance, by exclusion, whilst ignorant, from employment, with which education is combined, such as in factories. He believed many parents to be too poor to educate their children at all until they obtained work for them in the mills. In the first place, this objection is obviated by the plan of national education; but even were not this adopted, it affords no barrier to the other; for it is sufficiently manifest, that where one child was excluded from factory education by it, one hundred at the very least would be educated for admission to other trades with which education is now wholly unconnected.

If it be admitted that our eminence and wealth as a nation depend, in a great degree, on the artistical skill and general talent of the working classes; I apprehend that this desideratum can scarcely be more directly furthered than by a law which shall secure to artisans the elements of intelligence. Again, if it be expedient that we enjoy the full blessing of popular government, it were difficult to conceive any measure better calculated than an educational franchise to secure in those who share in government a knowledge of how to govern, or one more likely to steer between the evils of oligarchical and mob ascendancy, than a law identifying extended suffrage with the extension of education. It may be perfectly true, that in a popular government no man ought to be excluded from his share in choosing legislators; but it does not follow that in a state of society any man ought to exercise even a natural right, whether he choose to qualify himself to exercise it or not.

Immense importance of giving further extension and facility to Education.

It were almost impertinent to enlarge on the urgent need of the extension of education among the people; I look upon it as the rudder whereby alone Government can direct a people aright, and as the indispensable instrument of all good influences, and the lever of all ameliorating agencies. I need still less insist on the lamentable deficiency of education among the masses; for is not error of the most destructive and fatal tendency propounded among bodies of the people, and accepted with general assent even among communities where partial light is supposed to have been shed? The Scottish people are by far the most enlightened, but, as I have before stated, the rising generation are considerably less instructed; and whatever advantages education has hitherto given to the elder weavers, in enabling them to leave the loom, which thousands have done, it is to be feared that but little of that advantage or facility will remain to their successors.

The Scottish parochial system is very defective, and I have often found the children understanding but little of what they were taught.

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I am decidedly of opinion, that unity of plan is essential for the most beneficial extension of education, and this can be alone done by Government; education is too important to be entrusted to the accidental possession of the peculiar qualifications required for its superintendence, which may happen to be found in any professional class of men, the clergy, for instance, who may be the best qualified for spiritual, and yet the worst qualified for scholastic instruction, or for the superintendence of its application. Besides, it cannot be entrusted to the control of any class or sect, without necessarily rendering it liable to become subservient to particular opinions, and consequently exclusive, instead of making it, what it ought to be, a means to judgment, inclusive, of course, of all branches of instruction, properly so called, of which I, for one, hold the Bible to be an essential part: this has been well effected at the Liverpool corporation schools, where, independent of sects, not only is the secular education admirable, but the Bible is constantly, and has been always read, and explained. The following passage, from a recent letter from Mr. Rathbone, the late mayor, to me, is in reply to a letter I wrote to him on this subject:—

"From the very first day the schools came under our direction, the authorized version of the whole Bible was read by all the Protestants who could read, and *to* all who could not read, and has never been excluded the schools either north or south. I believe the quantity of scriptural education in our schools exceeds that of most others, and I fearlessly challenge the examination of our classes in competition with any school in the three Kingdoms. I am happy to add, that the Catholics read their own version with a degree of knowledge and zeal which ought to be very consolatory to those who have a real faith in the efficacy of the Bible. As I have been one of the committee of management from the commencement, I speak from my own knowledge, and you, I think, will bear me witness (where I may not be known), that this is not a subject on which I should speak lightly, or without recollecting (what too many appear to forget), that the more righteous the cause, the more truthful ought to be the means by which it should be promoted.

"I remain, my dear sir,

"To J. C. Symons, Esq." "With respect, your's faithfully,

"*William Rathbone.*"

The qualification of apprentices would be a collateral measure, and might very easily be adopted by the Legislature: it seems to involve so little difficulty of execution, and to compass so large a benefit, that it is not easy to foresee an objection to its early adoption. The Act ought, of course, to name a period for its coming into operation sufficiently distant to enable parents to commence at once the education of children hitherto uninstructed and designed for apprenticeships: one year would be more than sufficient. The indenture should attest the competency of the youth's education, with a penalty of 200 *l.* against the master, recoverable by summary process, on all infractions of the law.

The following are the Rules whereby this measure is already put in force by the Messrs. Cobden, manufacturers at Manchester, and who are fully confirmed in the practicability and success of the experiment:—

"RULES to be observed in the SABDEN WORKS, in the admission of Youths to different Branches of Business, after the first of January 1838.

"1. With the exception of existing engagements, no young person can, in future, be permitted to learn the respective businesses of Pattern Drawing, Block Cutting, Block Printing, or Machine Printing, who may not be able to read and write with tolerable correctness, and who may not also know something of accounts.

"2. As a motive to self-improvement in those young men that are already employed in the above businesses, any one of them that may complete his term of seven years after December, 1838, and who may not have, in the meantime, gained for himself a tolerably correct knowledge of reading, writing and arithmetic, cannot have the promise of employment after the expiration of his term of seven years, except in such cases where the attainment of such knowledge can be proved to have been impossible.

"3. To avoid any infringement of the Act of Parliament lately passed to regulate the employment of young children, &c., as well as upon the ground of humanity and duty, and also to give an opportunity to lay a foundation for education at an early age, no child can in future be admitted to any employment that may be under the age of nine years.

"Sabden, January 1, 1838."

Emigration is not deemed acceptable by the weavers generally as a means of relief: they conceive that the number emigrating must be immense, to effect any change in the condition of those who remain; and that as to those who go, it would be preferable to bring food to the people, instead of taking the people to the food. Emigration.

The population of the United Kingdom amounts to 27,000,000 persons. Suppose that the enormous number of 2,700,000 were emigrated, and supposing that we have the means of shipping this mass of people to the antipodes; supposing Mr. Wakefield right in his belief, that the new colony would repay the cost of their transport; admitting all this, the amount by which the population of the three countries would be diminished, would be by *one-tenth* of the whole; and the food remaining would be increased only by one-tenth. So that the weaver now subsisting on 5 *s.* per week, would be benefited by the amount of 6 *d.* only per week. But agricultural produce would fall in price, which will first of all cause some land to go out of cultivation, and, consequently, the price of food would again rise; therefore, the people who remained, would not gain quite one-tenth more food, even were emigration adopted to the almost impracticable extent I have assumed.

The tax on the indentures of apprentices appears to be seldom paid; in the whole of Paisley there were only three instances of it. The effect is, of course, to increase the excess of labour, by enabling the youths to commence weaving for themselves far earlier than were they bound for the usual period. Comparatively few leave the trade. The weavers very generally desire a reduction of this stamp duty to 1 *s.*, and on a printed form. Tax on Indentures of Weavers.

Whilst recurring to the facilities afforded to the excess of labour, I beg to remark, that weaving is the trade which all the idlest class of criminals who are sent to the Glasgow Bridewell are taught; this practice seems ingeniously calculated to assist in overstocking the weaving trade with the vilest class in the community. No less than 55 looms were, according to the statement of Mr. Brebner, the governor, employed last May in initiating at one time these persons into the weaving business. Weaving taught at the Glasgow Bridewell.

The enactment of some stronger law for the suppression of the demoralizing and ruinous system of embezzling weft is urgently advocated by the manufacturer, and likewise by the majority of the weavers themselves. Embezzlement of Weft.

On this subject I have received so many important documents, that I must place them in the concluding evidence. I would particularly refer to the legislative enactment recommended by the Procurator Fiscal of Maybole.

The decrease of spirit shops is also strongly desired, by means of heavy duties on the licenses. The Total Abstinence Societies are making great progress in Scotland, and are effecting much good; but the frightful effects of spirit drinking imperatively require a still more cogent check, though not as regards hand-loom weavers. Spirit Drinking.

Taxes or restrictions on power-looms have been advocated by so few persons, that they require no notice.

The removal of the tax on the importation of cotton-wool is unanimously desired. Some suggestions have been made to impose it on the export of power-loom manufactures instead.

An open market for the sale of webs, as at Leeds, has been recommended. The general reduction of taxation has been greatly advocated; more error prevails on this point than on any other. It is very difficult to convince the weavers that the interest of the national debt is not so much money paid away, and lost by the nation, instead of being neither more nor less than a part of the country's capital, drawn, it is true, in unequal proportion from the working classes, but *in great part* paid back to them in the shape of employment and remuneration of labour by the recipients, and that equally, whether the fundholders live in England or abroad.

EVIDENCE.

Mr. *Daniel Allan*, weaver, Glasgow—"Is sure that boards of trade, such as recommended, would enable the manufacturers of Glasgow to raise wages. Penalties to be from 10 *l.* to 40 *l.*, to be paid to defray expenses of local board, with

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with a premium to the person who gave information of the infraction. This board would bind the manufacturers, and those they employed; would not prevent wages being ground down by unprincipled manufacturers, but would be a general benefit to trade. In 1827 emigration was adopted in west of Scotland and round Glasgow the weavers petitioned for means of emigration, but Mr. Canning laid their hopes prostrate in one speech: subsequently to that refusal, the weavers have given up hoping for it. It must be done on a very extensive scale, if at all, and turned to Ireland first. No objection to the measure, provided means be granted by Government. Upper Canada preferred. The weaver's time is so valuable, that, even if there were free schools, they would not be attended by their children. Desires repeal of duty on cotton-wool. Relief by means of public works are not liked in Scotland, as it sinks the people in their own estimation. Apprentices almost extinct among the Glasgow weavers."

Mr. *James Morrison*, weaver, Glasgow—"Is in favour of boards of trade, because it would be an inducement for the Irish to remain in their own country; and thinks their being here, has a tendency to increase the rents of houses and the price of provisions: his opinion is, that if the board of trade was established, that wages would be slightly raised in case of brisk trade only, and generally equalized; but if this remedy were adopted, would not, on that account, the less seek to obtain better employment for his children. Does not believe the board of trade would be able to raise the rate of wages to such an amount as would properly maintain himself and family. Believes that there would be a general disposition on the part of weavers to accept emigration, if it were on a sufficiently extensive scale."

Mr. *Hugh M'Cormick*, weaver, Glasgow—"Advocates the Glasgow plan of a board of trade, but is of opinion that this plan, if adopted, would not have the effect of raising the prices of weaving much, nor to the extent that ought to satisfy the weavers; but also believes that the said plan would prevent the rate of wages falling further. Advocates repeal of the corn-laws. Thinks that were emigration adopted on a sufficiently large scale, the weavers would adopt it with avidity. Advocates an open market for the sale of webs, which would prevent the present system of selling goods at ready cash-houses."

Mr. *James Johnston*, weaver, Glasgow—"Advocates boards of trade, more as a means of encouraging and inspiriting the weaver, than as raising the rate of wages for them immediately; thinks the manufacturers are able to raise the rate of wages (notwithstanding the pressure of foreign markets and machinery) up to the amount they were paying in 1837, before the reduction took place; and if this were done, no more complaints would be heard. Thinks emigration would be adopted by the weavers if on a sufficiently large scale, and the means found. Remembers petitions being sent up in 1817 and 1819; these were the periods when great distress prevailed in the country; weavers were disappointed at the reception their petitions met with, were consequently disheartened, and abandoned the subscriptions they had commenced making among themselves for the purpose, their poverty also increasing."

Mr. *Thomas Barr*, weaver, Glasgow, was of opinion—"That boards of trade were not wanted. Competition among masters would cease in a great measure if corn-laws were repealed. The greatest remedy would be the repeal of the corn-laws; wishes all duties, protecting or otherwise, abolished; also the taxes imposed by Government; that on foreign silks imported likewise, which would, if preceded by the repeal of the corn-laws, improve the home trade in silks. Has no doubt emigration would do considerable good, if on a sufficient scale, that is, if the Legislature were as liberal in this respect as they were to the negro slaves; but is of opinion, that they would not grant sufficient means for emigration even if the whole people were to demand it. All that witness wants is, that trade should be let alone."

Mr. *Hamilton Pringle*, weaver, Glasgow—"Thinks boards of trade would only work the ruin of hand-loom weavers themselves, if adopted now; for it would have the effect of persuading the Government that the weavers were content with what they had at present, whilst there are other causes of depression which a board of trade could not prevent. Advocates a repeal of the corn-laws as the chief

chief remedy. Thinks emigration good; but the best way of emigrating, is when a man can obtain means for himself, which makes it more pleasant. If this were done on a large scale, it would be good for the country and the weavers themselves; thinks there are many here who would be glad to get this mode of relief. Advocates education, as a means of showing the weavers their true condition, its causes and remedies; thinks the reduction of the newspaper tax did good in this respect.

James Hutcheson, esq., manufacturer, Glasgow, considers—"That as the superfluity of labour is the primary cause of the depression of wages, no legislative measure can raise the rate of wages so long as that superfluity exists. Witness having heard the terms of the plan of the board of trade proposed by the weavers of Glasgow, stated, as his opinion, that any such plan would be wholly insufficient for permanently raising the wages of the hand-loom weavers, and for the following reasons:—1st, because if the minimum fixed did not greatly increase the rate of wages, it is manifest no improvement could ensue; 2dly, if it did increase them, the manufacturer would be undersold by men who would weave on their own account, who would be bound by no such regulations as would bind the regular manufacturer, and on whom no penalties could be inflicted for making and selling his cloth in any way that he pleased, and on whom it would be impossible to inflict the penalties prescribed, and that by this means the regular manufacturer would be compelled to withdraw from the trade, and would become the mere purchaser of the cloth so manufactured; therefore the system ensuing from a board of trade would not improve the rate of the weavers' wages. Is desirous of a reduction in the duties imposed on the import of foreign corn:—1st, because it would greatly increase our home manufacture, by enabling the foreigner to purchase them with the only commodity, viz. corn, which he can give to any extent in payment for them, and which we are now entirely prevented from receiving; 2dly, because cheaper bread would be a direct benefit to the operative. Does not think that manufacturers would reduce wages to the same extent as the fall of price of bread, for the manufacturer would then be relieved of the great disadvantage under which he now labours in competition with foreign manufacturers, who have provisions much cheaper. Thinks that if emigration, or some other means for diminishing the superfluity of labour, could be adopted on a sufficiently large scale to diminish the excess of labour, it would unquestionably raise the condition of the weaver, but not otherwise; does not see how open markets for the sale of webs is to mend the matter, so far as the weaver is concerned, as by this means the regular manufacturer would be undersold.

Francis Finlayson, esq., manufacturer, Glasgow—"Does not advocate a repeal of the corn-laws which, witness apprehends, would make the agriculturists producers, instead of consumers, but considers the question a very intricate one."

John M'Leod, esq., manufacturer, Glasgow—"In 1812, 13, an attempt was made to establish a board of trade in Paisley, which entirely failed, not being able to agree among the members who composed it.

"Thinks that men who chose to evade the plan could easily do so by any unprincipled man conniving with the manufacturer. The weavers themselves would, moreover, make webs on their own account, and drive the manufacturer out of the trade. That any interference is an injury, but most to the poor.

"Advocates a good moral education as an alleviation of the distress, without which, no rate of wages will make men respectable or comfortable. Thinks this would tend to prevent men from making improvident or early marriages."

James Davidson, esq., manufacturer, Glasgow, states—"That he cannot see that a board of trade would do any good for the weaver; would be forced to enable his master to evade the penalties, or go wholly without work.

"Boards of trade would not affect the foreign market, or prevent the progress of machinery and its effect in lowering prices and wages. In fact, boards of trade would not create a demand; if there was constant and full employment, this plan might do, but not when stagnation or dulness of trade occurred.

"Advocates a small permanent duty on corn; would allow it to come in at all times; thinks this the most beneficial mode for farmers and commerce.

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"If Government could supply a certain fund for emigration on a large scale, it would, doubtless, be better for the distressed weavers.

"Thinks there is not much prospect of things mending, as there is a growing competition, and a natural tendency of prices in trade to decline."

Thomas Davidson, esq., manufacturer, Glasgow—"Does not think that a board of trade would prove injurious either to the manufacturers or weavers; and is of opinion, so long as legislative protection is given to various other interests of trade, the experiment of a board of trade might be tried.

"Thinks, nevertheless, that the jealousies existing amongst the manufacturers, and the feelings of alienation existing between the manufacturers and the weaving operative, would render it difficult to prevent the evasion of the provision of such a board.

"Does not think that men purchasing their own materials, and weaving their webs at home, would be enabled to undersell the regular manufacturer with a capital to such an extent as to render boards of trade nugatory.

"Thinks the chief advantage in this plan would consist in giving more permanence and equalization in wages; but it would not prevent the effect of those circumstances, which would necessarily tend to bear down the price of goods, and consequently the rate of wages.

"Is of opinion, that a board of trade would not actually raise the rate of wages now paid to the hand-loom weavers in periods of ordinarily fair trade.

"Thinks the trade may in some degree recover from the late serious depressions, but will never attain a soundand healthy state. Repeats, that he would, pending the existence of monopolies and protections, still recommend a board of trade as an experiment, and thinks that all legislative interference with the relation between labour and capital is injurious, but that, by adding in the above respect to the amount of such restrictions, we should induce capitalists to feel the evil of those legislative restrictions which had occasioned the necessity of a board of trade, and thus render them conscious of the benefit and necessity of perfect freedom to commerce. Thinks the weavers, as a body, do not look for relief from this measure as a remedy to their condition; neither are the adult portion qualified to encounter the casualties of emigration; is nevertheless of opinion, that the Government system of emigration is applicable to the younger branches of the hand-loom weavers, and ought to be adopted as one means of relief."

William Craig, esq., merchant, Glasgow—"Though I condemn all legislative restrictions on the relations between labour and capital, as being false in policy, yet, so long as the corn-laws, and other protections to the wealthy classes, are continued, would advocate that some protection, by a board of trade, or otherwise, should be afforded to the hand-loom weavers; and thinks that a board of trade might, as an experiment, be tried for this purpose, which he believes would have the effect of preventing a reduction in the rate of wages; and considers that, if competition among masters were thus prevented, a rise in wages would take place, but cannot say to what extent."

Alexander Johnston, esq., manufacturer, Glasgow—"Believes boards of trade would have no effect in increasing the demand for manufactures, which would alone raise the wages of the weaver. If wages were raised, machinery would be extended and made applicable to fabrics now wove by the hand, because, and only because, hand labour is so cheap as not to make it an object to apply machinery. Has applied power to checks, and should decidedly continue to do so, did not the low rate of hand-loom weaving render it unnecessary.

"Thinks the corn-laws one of the greatest evils under which the commerce and manufactures of the country labour. The benefit would arise, not only in cheapening food, but by creating an extra demand for labour for manufactures to export in exchange for foreign corn.

"Thinks the increase of population to be a benefit, instead of an evil. Employers will not reduce wages commensurately with the fall on provisions.

"Believes

"Believes that great increase of the improvement of machinery can alone enable us to maintain our commercial position under the present restrictions; that one-half of our cotton manufactures go abroad. Thinks that emigration would be rendered unnecessary bay repeal of the corn-laws, and also by the removal of combinations from other trades.

Mr. *Archibald Blue*, sen., weaver, Glasgow—"Advocates a board of trade, and also a small fixed duty on corn. Believes foreigners cannot purchase our goods, unless we take theirs in return, and that the repeal of the corn-laws would create a circulating medium, not so much as a means of cheapening bread. Wishes to have a duty imposed on those who enter trade without a sufficient capital. Believes weavers have been much injured by people without capital failing, and sending their goods into the market at low prices.

"Wishes to have a drawback on the export power-wove cottons, and a repeal of the duty on the raw material, and a remission on the duty of articles consumed by the working classes.

"Sour flour should be imported duty free."

Mr. *John Ure*, weaver, Glasgow—"Wishes a board of trade, for the sake of equalising wages, but does not think it would raise the rate of wages."

Mr. *William Gardner*, jun., newspaper reporter, formerly connected with manufacturing—"Believes a repeal of the corn-laws, or a small fixed duty, would cheapen provisions here, and equalise prices on the continent, and increase our manufactures, and give our native skill full effect.

"Believes a board of trade would not equalise, nor raise the rate of wages; believes it would be evaded; and as long as there is an excess of labour, it is impossible to raise the rate of wages."

Mr. *Walter Pattison*, weaver, Glasgow—"Believes a board of trade would raise the rate of wages, but not enough to affect the trade, and that the regulations of the board would be evaded. Messrs. John Robertson and Hugh Brown have told him, that it was the competition of other manufacturers that prevented his paying 2*d.* per ell more than he was doing. Desires a repeal of the corn-laws."

Mr. *John Bennett*, weaver, Glasgow—"The repeal of the corn-laws is the only remedy required, together with the abolition of all taxes restricting commerce, the cause of all the evils laboured under. Considers boards of trade might fix a price, but could not give employment; it might shackle trade, but demand is all they want. Believes boards of trade would not prevent manufacturers from competing, and that weavers themselves would evade it, when they could not get work at the fixed prices; has seen forged tickets himself, when the minimum prices were fixed in 1827. It would tend to produce habits of deception.

"Thinks that it would be necessary to carry off at least half a million a-year to make an effect; if we had free trade, we could support double the number we have.

"The establishment of a public market, like the cloth-market at Leeds, for the sale of webs, might be advantageous."

Mr. *Thomas Ferguson*, weaver, Rutherglen—"Instead of a board of trade, wishes the Government to make a grant of money, for the purpose of establishing in Scotland corporate bodies of weavers, who might manufacture on their own account, with a committee of management to carry on their affairs; and that the general body of weavers should be as journeymen to this committee, which should be elected every half year, and that the journeymen should have a full share of all profits, after deducting expenses.

"Believes they would be able to raise wages by this means.

"Looks upon the board of trade with much jealousy; believes the small manufacturers would evade the penalties; that if men were thrown out of employment, they would themselves render it of non-effect, by accepting of low wages.

"Wishes a repeal of the corn-laws; considers them the ruin of the country.

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"Licenses for selling spirits to be granted to respectable and moral persons only; wishes the power taken out of the hands of the magistrates, and placed in the hands of an officer properly appointed, and would wish the licenses heightened.

"In Cambuslang, in the year 1795, there were only three public-houses, now there are nineteen, although the population has not increased one-half."

Hugh M'Farlane, esq., manufacturer, Paisley—"Does not think a board of trade will do any good. Thinks a local board would send the goods to the country, and a general board would have the effect of sending the manufactures out of the country; thinks that were it carried into effect, many manufacturers would give up trade. Has had several offers from weavers to take work under the table price; but to mark the proper price as paid to the weavers in his books, but declined them. Majority of manufacturers are against the board of trade."

Mr. *John Osburn*, weaver, Paisley—"Is decidedly for a repeal of the corn-laws, and reduction of stamps on indentures to 1*s.*, for weavers only.

"Advocates also a board of trade, until the above measures are given; thinks a board of trade would keep the wages from sinking, by taking away the surplus competition of weavers, and rendering it necessary for the country to provide for them by some other way; but does not think the board would have any tendency to keep weavers out of employment more than they would be without it."

"Wishes standards for silk and cottons equalised, same as the linen-yarn."

—— *Gray*, esq., of the firm of Messrs. Gray and Howison, manufacturers, Edinburgh, states—"That to his own knowledge, that a flour-mill, containing 31 pair mill-stones, has been erected at Warsaw; and that Mr. Kedslie has been engaged to manage it; and workmen have been taken from the mills at the water of Leith, at wages of 21*s.* per week, free-houses, fire-wood, &c.

"Advocates a repeal of the corn-laws as the only remedy."

John Sinclair, esq., manufacturer, Edinburgh—"Advocates the repeal of the corn-laws. Wishes to have a copyright for a year for the new patterns, in consequence of the piracy of Edinburgh patterns at Paisley."

Committee of Weavers, Edinburgh, Alexander Warnock, James Blair, John Jackson, John Thomson, James M'Kechmie, James Kerr, Thomas Graham, William Boyce, Joseph M'Lintock—"Unanimous for a repeal of the corn-laws, but not in favour of board of trade."

EVIDENCE of *John Maxwell*, esq., of Pollok, Deputy Lieutenant and Justice of the Peace, F. R. S.

General Evidence.

Mr. *Maxwell* states—"That he considers that the greatly depressed condition of the hand-loom weavers is to be attributed, in great degree, to taxation, falling, as it does, upon the labourer, and necessitating a greater expense of living, and higher wages in Great Britain than in other countries, entering into competition with her in mercantile affairs. The merchants and manufacturers have recourse to foreign seamen and to machinery, not only because these produce the articles they wish to send for, but because such markets, and the vessels in which they export commodities, do so on terms nearer those for which a foreign merchant and a foreign manufacturer are enabled to supply them for in exchange. Does not think the relief to the labourer could be deprived him by the reduction of his wages, were capital taxed, because the working man would be able, either as a sailor or as a workman in any branch of industry, to furnish his labour without depriving himself of the decencies of life, which would enable him to work on the same terms with the foreigner and the machine. This, witness thinks, is illustrated by the tax on leather, which shows the unequal pressure of indirect taxation. Machinery is not taxed in the article of coal, whilst the labourer is taxed on bread, spirit, tea, sugar, &c. Advocates therefore a property-tax, as the means of restoring prosperity and contentment, mitigating the poor-laws, preventing crime and transportation, raising expensive gaols, keeping up standing armies, which would be immediately susceptible of very great reduction. The collection of a property-tax witness thinks cheaper than any other, as in the case

of

of the public creditor, and the persons deriving their income from pensions or otherwise from Government; and believes that if taxes on land, houses, machinery, buildings, mines, &c., were levied, they would be very easily made amenable, at very little expense. Believes nothing would reconcile the poor man so well to the evils he might have to undergo, as the certainty that the rich man contributed to the poor. Has heard landholders and fundholders assent to this measure. Considers that the corn-laws can never be other than an oppressive mode of collecting taxes; but great doubts are entertained by weavers themselves, whether a more qualified trade in corn might not benefit the master in the long run, and throw out of employ other labourers driving them to the loom, and thereby render them not such good consumers as they now are. His own opinion is, that it is absolutely necessary to select some one species of grain, and immediately to allow it to come into this country on a small duty, or otherwise. Thinks that the trial of a fixed duty, with the permission of a constant introduction of grain, should be made by the Government. Considers the conflicting opinions on free trade would be thereby brought to a test, and the manufacturers who exported cloth, would be able to bring in from all parts some of that grain whenever they could make it profitable; instead of food being a matter of gambling in the hands of the fundholder, like railway shares or Cornish mines. Thinks the corn-laws were passed in order that great capitalists might raise the prices.

With regard to boards of trade, from observation of the condition of the weavers of Spitalfields, before and since the abolition of the Act of 1775, under the administration of Earl Chatham, has confirmed witness in the belief that regulations are beneficial, as long as the taxation of the country and its liabilities to interruption of commerce, from war or other causes, leading to decrees, such as Milan, and contractions and expansions of the circulating medium. When witness went to Sweden in 1814 and 1815, the guinea was worth thirty shillings, and the pound-note was worth not more than the half of that sum, but cannot say with precision the exact amount it was worth; but believes that at Paris the exchange in francs was at one time thirty or forty per cent.

"The effect produced by a board of trade, where masters and men, or their representatives, acted together, would be the means of establishing a better understanding of the feelings of master and men, and of the circumstances of each other, and the weaving body would become acquainted with the lowering of the price of foreign goods, or of the loss of demand at home, by which a reduction of wages became necessary, in order that the manufacturer could carry on his trade without either a loss of capital, or such low profit as would incline him to decline the risk or trouble of carrying on manufacturing business at all; and witness is satisfied that the immense majority of the weavers would be satisfied with the statement made to them by their own delegate, who might have been informed, by the books or foreign letters of maunfacturers' intelligence, which the masters would not give to all the world, but which he would have no objection to give to the weavers who were appointed by, and in the confidence of, the whole body; and is satisfied that it would become disgraceful for a manufacturer to take advantage of those weavers who are too virtuous to steal, and not sufficiently degraded to beg, and therefore will take wages so low, that the mean and avaricious manufacture would give, for this purpose of getting a profitable trade by selling for a certain time, goods made at a less price than the manufacturers who try to give decent wages would be able to do, and this profit would no longer be within reach of such discreditable, ignorant or insolent manufacturer, who would be entirely put an end to, because there could be no reduction without every manufacturer being aware of the fact.

"Believes it would be utterly impossible to content the weavers in general, unless the expedient of a board of trade be made by the Legislature, because, to his certain knowledge, all the most intelligent and thinking weavers of England and Scotland consider the system would be equivalent to the protecting duties which are given to manufacturers, farmers, distillers, brewers, and shipowners in their different trades, as an indemnity against indirect taxes. And the weaving body having comparatively but very little influence over members in the House of Commons, feel perhaps more than electors would do, the inattention and neglect to petitions, which have for so long a time and unanimously solicited this experiment; although he believes that many of them contemplate taxation and restrictions

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tions on foreign trade only desirable so long as taxes and restrictions give to machinery and foreigners an unfair advantage in the market of labour; and as the labour of the weaver, unlike the web of his master, is lost for ever when it is not employed, he thinks it doubly requires the care and protection of the Legislature, being not only property and income, but the only property he and his family possess in the world to depend on; every days' labour which he loses, or for which he does not get a fair remuneration, brings him into want or into debt, for the subsistence which he obtains by the credit of his character, either with the master who employs him, or the tradesman who trusts him; although his credit in this respect only enables him to subsist, at the risk of imprisonment, or a sort of slavery to the master, whose price of weaving he is obliged to submit to."

Postponed and further Evidence of Mr. *Maxwell.*

Witness thinks—"That if the system of a board of trade were carried into effect by masters and men conjointly, the evasions would be so trifling as very little to diminish the efficacy of the system. Believes that it would raise the rate of wages to a limited, but not to a very great extent, by keeping up a general knowledge amongst all the weaving body in every fabric, and enabling a weaver to state to any body offering work the general rate fixed by the conventional mutual agreement of masters and men agreeing upon it at a board of trade, which he could have access to at all times, by means of the publicity of prices enjoined by it; and conceives that the great security it would give to the masters against reductions, arising from the distress of the workmen and contraband competition, and not from depreciation in the value of woven goods, would enable the masters to pay without any disadvantage, and with very little diminution of profit, wages more adequate to the wants, necessities and difficulties of the honest and meritorious workman.

"He conceives moreover, in reference to the above, that the workman would, under such a system, be a better consumer of his master's goods, and have much less temptation to act fraudulently by the property placed in his hands by the manufacturers. Considers, likewise, that the board would produce a better feeling between workmen and masters. Thinks that some tribunal might be established for the adjudication of disputes as to the rate of wages which the trade would permit, at the board's decision of prices to be paid, which might consist of persons having no interest in the trade, but who might be persons retired from it: or constituted like the Conseil des Prudhommes in France. A court of arbitration so constituted, would be capable of a more equitable adjustment than judicial authorities, who are ignorant of all matters connected with the trade.—[*This is Mr. Maxwell's original suggestion.*]

To the question put to witness—"Whether a board of trade, efficiently in operation, would not have the effect of reducing those workmen to utter destitution, who might not be able to obtain work at the fixed rate?"—Mr. Maxwell replied, that—"As none of them would work extra hours, few would cease to be employed, and that few would solve at once the problem of the real excess of hand-loom labour which would justify the assistance of emigration, and convince the weavers themselves of the necessity of adopting some other occupation."

Question. "If the weavers worked a shorter time, would not the slight increase of wages alleged to be likely to arise from a board of trade, be thereby wholly nullified."

Answer. "Thinks not. I believe that the greater security against under-selling the master, and the diminished supply of the goods, would unquestionably improve the prices of weaving."

Question. "Do you think it possible that the alleged increasing competition of foreign manufactures would, under the existing duties on foreign grain, permit of any rise in the price of hand-loom fabrics, and consequently of any rise in the rate of wages?"

Answer. "I consider the value of goods sent to foreign markets, more particularly the Indian and American markets, to be very small, when all the charges of freight, insurance duties and others are taken into account, which come upon the exporter. The calculations of the burthen of the corn-laws on the weavers

are

are so much exaggerated as to make it very difficult to form any correct estimate of the extent of their prejudice to the interest of the weaving body, because, were corn ever so cheap, fuel, clothing, house-rent and subsistence being enhanced by taxation, nothing but one item of the articles of subsistence would be lowered in value; and would, of course, be exchangeable for a very small portion of taxed articles; when, by the greater cheapness of corn, the weavers would have more corn than they required. The surplus, like their own labour, versus that of the articles made by other classes, would be of comparatively little exchangeable value."

Question. "Are not all the chief commodities of life regulated in price by the price of wheat?"

Answer. "Believes this used to be the case; but cannot tell whether potatoes have become the standard at present, or meal."

Question. "In your former evidence, you stated that it would be desirable that the legislature should allow *one* grain to enter at all times on payment of such a fixed duty as would indemnify the agricultural interest against what you conceive would be the effects of the measure."

Answer. "Thinks such an experiment is due to the manufacturing interest, especially the suffering body in question; and the duty so collected would be a valuable fund in the hands of Government, to introduce remediable measures for the weavers, and to remove taxes bearing on their industry."

Question. "Can you state how much meal has been usually considered equivalent to a day's labour in Scotland?"

Answer. "Has always understood one peck per day has been considered so; but is of opinion that this would not be sufficient: at present, after the weaver had consumed such a quantity of the peck as he required, what remained would be nearly swallowed up by the taxes which he has to pay on all the other articles which are indispensable to himself and his family's subsistence, and therefore he would not have a surplus for fuel, clothing or house-rent. Though the residue of meal would exchange for other agricultural produce, it would command very little of sugar, tea, or such like exciseable articles."

Evidence of Dr. *Cleland.*

Dr. Cleland, formerly Superintendent of Public Works for the city of Glasgow, now one of Her Majesty's Acting Justices of the Peace for the county of Lanark, has been requested to give evidence relative to the Hand-loom Weavers in this district. It is as follows:—

"The declarant having been a member of the town council, and one of the city magistrates prior to 1814, and superintendent of public works for about 20 years subsequent to that period, had frequent opportunities of becoming generally acquainted with the habits and condition of the working classes, and more particularly with that of the hand-loom weavers. During successive periods of mercantile distress, when weavers could not find employment at their looms, declarant employed and superintended several hundreds of them at out-door work; and it is no more than an act of justice to say, that on these occasions (some of them periods of great political agitation), the weavers conducted themselves with the greatest propriety. Of late years, the earnings of the hand-loom weavers have been so much reduced, that the great proportion of their families are destitute of those comforts, and even necessaries, which other artisans enjoy. The average earnings of weavers of plain muslin fabrics, after working 12 or even 14 hours, do not, so far as the declarant has been able to ascertain, exceed one shilling per day. The reduction in the price of weaving seems to arise from various causes; the most prominent appear to be—

"1st. The number of weavers greatly exceeding the demand. The comparative facility with which children of from 10 to 12 years of age can earn a subsistence on the loom, induce parents, particularly weavers, to give a preference to this trade, without considering that they are voluntarily over-stocking the labour market. The

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The extension of the power-loom during the last 20 years has been severe upon the poor hand-loom weavers, who are generally sober, frugal and intelligent, and who have suffered long from low wages with exemplary patience.

" 2d. The introduction of power-looms. From the great improvements in machinery of late years, the power-loom can now produce fancy fabrics, which a few years ago were not thought of, and at a much lower rate than the hand-loom: and—

" 3d. Competition in the foreign market. The low rate at which soft goods can be manufactured abroad, tends to keep down the price of weaving at home.

" A combination of these facts confirmed the declarant in the belief that a board of trade fixing a minimum rate of wages, would be impolitic, detrimental alike to the operative, the manufacturer, and the merchant: to the operative it would be particularly hurtful, inasmuch as, during a stagnation of trade, when the price which the manufacturer could firmly afford, fell below the minimum rate, the weaver would be instantly thrown out of employment. Although the case of the hand-loow weaver is much to be deplored, there seems to be no remedy in a board of trade fixing a minimum rate of wages.

" In reviewing the whole matter, the declarant is humbly, yet firmly, of opinion, that the condition of the hand-loom weavers would be greatly ameliorated were the Government to grant the necessary facilities for establishing a given number of the families of hand-loom weavers in the British colonies.

" Glasgow, 130, Upper Nile-street,
27 March 1838." " *James Cleland.*"

EVIDENCE of *Alexander Graham*, esq.

" Sir,

Glasgow, 18 April 1838.

" With reference to my conversation with you in the council chambers, and in reply to your official letter of 16th instant, I do not think I can throw any light on the subject of your investigation, in addition to the statements which have already been made by the various manufacturers examined. Indeed, any opinions I may have formed on this subject, are much more founded on the notorious representations, current and public, in this neighbourhood, than upon my acquaintance with the details of the history and condition of the hand-loom weavers. The peculiar causes of the excessive supply of, in proportion to the demand for, their labour, and their consequently low rate of remuneration (such as the comparative freedom and other attractions of weaving, as an occupation; the facilities of learning it, even at an early age; the difficulties of various kinds, and *especially from the combination rules* of other trades, which weavers encounter in attempting either to enter these themselves, or even to train their children to them; the great and continued influx of Irish labourers, many of them already weavers; the system pursued by many of the manufacturers of establishing agencies in Ireland, and even, in the cheap districts of Scotland, for the purpose of getting their webs wrought at lower rates than they could do near themselves; the cheapness of certain fabrics from stolen yarns; the progress of power and dandy-loom weaving, in producing fabrics formerly wrought by the hand,) have all, I believe, been already brought under your notice. The old poor-laws of England, by allowing the English weaver part of his maintenance, must have enabled his employer to produce cheaper than the Scotch manufacturer, and thus tended to oblige the latter to seek relief by pressing down the wages of the Scotch weaver. The Peace of 1815 threw a great number of discharged soldiers into the trade. I conceive that, generally, a trade for the production of luxurious and fanciful manufactures, is more liable to fluctuation and depressions, than one for the production of staples, and the necessaries of life; and the fabrics in which a considerable proportion of the hand-looms are occupied, seem precisely of the former description. In illustration of the pernicious operation of the Scotch manufacturers' agencies in Ireland, I may mention, that the same work can now be done there at 40 per cent. under Glasgow rates. I was yesterday informed of a Glasgow manufacturer, who, prior to the late depression in business, employed, through his agents in Ireland, 500 looms. In exemplification of the prohibitory

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prohibitory barriers which the combinations present to the weaver in his attempts to train his children to other trades, I may mention, that having been, about a month ago, called upon by deputation of the hand-loom weavers, who were collecting money to enable them to get forward witnesses for your commission, I, in subscribing a sum, observed, that 'there were too many of them,' and asked why 'they persevered in training their children to the trade?' Their reply was, 'We cannot help ourselves, as other trades *are under the combination rules, which prohibit the admission of more than a certain number of apprentices, and above which number, even the combined workmen themselves cannot get admission for their own children.*'

"I am humbly disposed to the opinion, that a repeal of the corn-laws, by reducing the price of provision, by equalising, at least to a considerable extent, the subsistence of the continental and British weaver, and by increasing the foreign demand for British fabrics, would tend much to improve the condition of the hand-loom weavers. Emigration on a considerable scale would probably give *temporary* relief, although it is to be feared, that a consequent increased action of causes which have been alluded to, must, unless otherwise counteracted, soon restore the weavers, as a class, to their former low condition. The regulation of a minimum of wages by any power whatever, would, it is unnecessary to say, be a violation of the received principles of political economy, and, even if defensible in justice and policy, could not, I humbly apprehend, be permanently practicable. The heartless and dishonourable manufacturer would acquire undue advantages over his more honest rivals; and a rate of wages, universal through the United Kingdom (as it would require in fairness to manufacturers competing with each other to be) would even (if it could be fixed and enforced), involve the absurdity of applying the same money-wage to different districts, without reference to the comparative high or low price of provisions, and habits of artificial want in each. In conclusion, allow me to add, that an improved intelligence among the hand-loom weavers and their families would render them more capable of observing and reflecting upon the sources of distress to which they are exposed by their peculiar position as a class of labourers, and inspire them with more of that prudence, foresight and calculation, by which their energies may be more wisely and successfully directed to other pursuits.

"I have the honour to be, sir,
"Your very obedient servant,

"To J. C. Symons, esq." "*Alex. Graham.*"

EVIDENCE on EMBEZZLEMENT, from the *Procurator Fiscal* of Maybole.

District of Carrick.

"The practice of embezzling cotton and other yarns given out for manufacture is, perhaps, more prevalent at the present time in this district of Ayrshire than ever it was before.

"The principal manufacturing places in the district are Girvan, Maybole and Crosshill, to each of which, work from Glasgow and Paisley is sent weekly. The number of workmen in these places and other villages may be 4,000.

"The embezzlement by winders not connected with the weaver's family is, I am sure, very trifling; while, on the other hand, the embezzlement by the weaver or his wife or family is enormous; and such is the profit to the purchaser of such weft, that regular and organized establishments exist for its purchase.

"In Maybole the system has been brought nearly to perfection. In order to commencing such a trade, the business of a pawnbroker (unlicensed, of course) is commenced, where the needy or dishonest workman finds a ready market for the yarns, and which are generally parted with at one-sixth of their value, and that value often given in goods at an enormous price, and of inferior quality. Sometimes money is paid at the rate of $2\frac{1}{2}$ *d.* for what would cost the manufacturer 1 *s.* Again, persons travel the country ostensibly selling articles of dress and trifling wares, which they barter with the weavers' wives for weft, and immediately sell it in bulk to the brokers. I have known of children being bribed by a penny, and a promise of sweetmeats, to steal the weft from their parents.

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"The loss to the manufacturer is in this way immense; I should suppose at least 1,200*l.* yearly in Girvan, Maybole and Crosshill; while the consequences to the weaver are most distressing: for instance, when a weaver or his family parts with part of his weft in this way, he endeavours to make it up by weaving the cloth much *thinner* than is specified in the ticket; the consequence is, that a great part of his wages is forfeited for thin work. Again, many of them dispose of the weft under the idea that they will be able to replace it before the web is finished (which can always be done by purchasing from the broker at his own price); and in this belief the workman continues to put in the stipulated quantity of weft. It almost always happens, however, that the workman is unable to supply the weft by purchase, and he then goes to the broker, and gives his clothes, or those of his wife and family, in exchange for the required supply of weft; and these he is never able to redeem; the consequence is, nakedness, starvation and decease.

"The weft thus acquired, is sent to Glasgow and Belfast, where it is readily bought by small manufacturers, and made into cloth, which undoubtedly can be sold at a less price than goods regularly manufactured.

"While, however, a ready market can always be found in Glasgow and Belfast for such weft, a practice has become common for these manufacturers (from Glasgow, I mean) to send chains of webs to the country, to some of their confederates, who again purchase the weft from the weavers, and finish the web, and return it, having thus perhaps a higher remuneration than if they had transmitted the weft to Glasgow.

"It may be asked, is there no means of putting an end to such a system? There are two difficulties in the way, and the first and principal one is, that the agents (some of whom deal in the articles themselves) will give no aid towards its suppression, nor have the Glasgow manufacturers hitherto interfered to interrupt it.

22 G. 2, 17 G. 3, c. 56.

"The second difficulty is, that the law as it now stands regarding the punishment for such offences is so highly penal, and, being in the English form, is so complicated and so dangerous to the Scots' practitioner, that few procurators fiscal are at all inclined to become complainers. The slightest error, either real or supposed, renders the complainer liable to be called into a superior court, and, as he has no interest to support the judgment, it often happens that a convicted buyer or receiver of embezzled materials is permitted to escape on the mere threat of a bill of suspension; and this will continue to be the case so long as the prosecutor is not protected by those manufacturers who have an interest in fair trade. The informer or prosecutor gets at most only a moiety of the fine, and from this all his expenses and trouble have to be paid, and these, I am certain, are seldom less than 10*l.*; while to support the conviction before the High Court of Justiciary would cost at least 40*l.*; and most likely, after the judgment was declared unobjectionable, the fine is irrecoverable.

"In the district to which I have alluded, I am not aware that any case has been brought under the statute, where I was not either the complainer, or the conductor of the case for the complainer, and at the same time taking upon myself the responsibility of the outlay, besides the loss that might arise from non-payment of my professional labour; and it has so happened that, from failing to satisfy the justices (where, in my opinion, the case was clear) that a conviction should follow, or from the total inability of the persons convicted to pay the penalty, I have been at least 15*l.* of outlay, besides my professional trouble. I have often had promises held out to me that the manufacturers of Glasgow would protect and remunerate any person under such circumstances; but although I have made known to them the whole circumstances now detailed, I have never been favoured with an answer.

"It cannot be expected, under such circumstances, that the public prosecutor, and far less a private individual, will interfere to check the crime of embezzlement.

"On this part of the subject I may conclude by observing, that in my opinion, no statute, how perfect soever, could check the crime of embezzling cotton and other materials of manufacture without the hearty co-operation of the manufacturers in large towns, and that of their agents in the country; how that is to be obtained I cannot point out, as assuredly the agents are fully aware of the

the evil, and the manufacturers ought to be so too, from the numerous notices of convictions and trials, if not from the too frequent occurrence of *thin* cloth.

" I hold, however, that the law itself should be in the best working order possible, and yet I do not think the statutes on this subject are so. It is perhaps not possible to make what I consider the defects of the law *apparent*, without rather a minute and lengthened commentary on the statutes; but as you seemed anxious for my opinion on the subject, I will consider the statute 17 Geo. 3, c. 56, section by section, so far as it relates to embezzlement, and point out what my experience in a twenty years' practice under the statute would suggest as improvements.

" It does not occur to me that the statutes are deficient in the enumeration of crimes or offences embraced by their provisions; indeed the distinct enumeration of the crimes, and the persons likely to commit them, denounced by the statute so far back as 1777, would infer that, from the extension of population, a revision of the law was necessary.

" The first alteration I would recommend, regards the *exclusive* jurisdiction given to the justices of the peace to try the offences under the statute; I do not say that this tribunal is inefficient, but there is no dispute that, generally, it is difficult to get justices to attend. The crimes are mostly committed in towns governed by magistrates, and I can see no good reason why the magistrates of such burghs as have a town clerk or assessor, should not be competent to the trial of all offences under the statute committed within their ordinary jurisdiction, as well as the sheriffs of counties, whose jurisdiction again would extend over the whole shire.

" The first section of the statute 22 Geo. 2, is amended by the first section of 17 Geo. 3, c. 56, so far only as the punishment is varied; the mode of proof, by the oath of the owner, or any other ' credible witness or witnesses,' being left entire. By the law of Scotland, a witness must be *competent* or *admissible* before he can be *credible*, and even after that, the credibility is a matter of some nicety. In no case can a conviction take place against a *receiver* of embezzled materials, without the evidence of the *seller*; and hesitation exists to consider *him* a *competent* or *admissible* witness: on principle, he is, perhaps, quite admissible, because although he is liable to punishment for having been the seller, yet his *interest* is to clear the accused, and if adduced for the prosecutor, the objection does not operate. Still there is hesitation and difference of opinion; and to bring the matter to the test by a judgment of the High Court of Justiciary, no prosecutor on his own responsibility will be a party to.

" At the same time, without the testimony of the buyer or seller, as the case may be, no conviction need be attempted, as care is taken that the *giver* and *receiver* of the yarn, whether for money, exchange or pawn, are the only persons present; but it would set the matter at rest, if in any alteration of the law it was declared that the buyer and seller are competent witnesses as against each other, leaving (as must be the case in all cases), their credibility to be judged by the nature of their testimony. This remark will apply to the mode of proof throughout the statute.

" The punishment, again, should in all cases of embezzlement, sale, &c. be a penalty recoverable in the most summary manner by warrant of distress in the first instance, and the *mode* of *executing* the *distress* should be *specially* pointed out; because although that mode of attachment is familiar in English practice, it is quite foreign to the usual form in the law of Scotland. It is, in fact, unknown in our practice, and for its form and mode of execution, the practice of England has to be referred to when occasion demands, and few, if any, practitioners have an opportunity of informing themselves on this important point in sufficient time to carry the law into execution in proper time.

" Again, if no distress can be found, then the delinquent should suffer such imprisonment as may be deemed sufficient. In all cases where a conviction is obtained, and where no appeal is taken (of which afterwards), power should be given to detain the delinquent, not exceeding *three* days, until it is seen whether or not he has goods and effects to answer the distress; if he has, he will then be set at liberty, and if he has not, his person is, in the meantime, safe to suffer the alternative of imprisonment.

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" Section 2—Provides, that all crimes shall be tried by two or more justices. This seems a proper provision for many reasons, which it is of no importance to enumerate.

" Section 3—Provides a penalty and punishment for the receivers of embezzled materials, quite different from that enacted by the 1st section against sellers, perhaps on the adage, ' that without receivers, there would be no thieves.'

" The only changes I would suggest on this section is, that, for recovery of the penalty, a warrant of distress should be granted in the first instance, as recommended in the observations on section 1st.

" I see no use in giving power to any judge to cause the delinquent to be whipped; it is a cruel punishment, not now necessary, from the already improved and still improving state of prison descipline.

" Section 4.—As regards a second offence and its trial by the quarter sessions is, to say the least of it, expensive and inconvenient. There is no good reason why a second offence should not be tried by the ordinary tribunal. On the contrary, there is every reason to maintain, that the person guilty of a second offence has not, under this section, the chance of fair play; as for that second offence, there is no power of appeal as for a first, for so I construe the import of section 20th to be afterwards noticed.

" Section 5.—This seems to apply to a third party, not the embezzler, selling or offering to sell, and inflicts the punishment applicable to the crime of buying in section 3d. This is a very round-about way of stating the punishment, and might be much amended by a special declaration of the extent of the punishment. This would not only save expense, so far as the length of the original information or complaint is concerned, but would also lessen the chance of errors which occasionally occur, from the necessity of quoting different sections of a statute as applicable to an offence and its punishments.

" Section 6.—I have never had any practice under this section, although I am aware that the practice of working up embezzled materials is a very common one. It has, for instance, of late become very common for private families to purchase Thibet yarn from weavers employed in the manufacture of shawls, for the purpose of making stockings, and from the fine texture of this material, it is preferred to silk, and looks equally well. A great deal of it is bought in this way by private families.

" But a greater quantity is bought by stocking-makers, who work it into stockings, and hawk these through the country. This section may with great propriety be retained, and improved by specifying the fine and imprisonment.

" Section 10.—The next section requiring any particular notice is the 10th, by which a power of search is given in the *day-time only*, and that on a complaint on *oath*. Perhaps to permit a search at night might lead to abuse; but to do away with the oath could not. At best it is but an oath of *credulity*, and creates expense and trouble without a single good purpose served.

" Section 13.—This section provides for the disposal of yarns *after* conviction, and so far it is well enough. There are, however, a numerous class of cases, where no sale can take place under the statutes. I allude to the case of embezzled yarn, &c. found on carriers' carts and on board of steam-boats. The most valuable seizures are made from these vehicles of conveyance, and yet there is no way of bringing these materials to sale, as that power under the statute is only granted where a *previous conviction has taken place*. Here no conviction can take place, as neither the carrier nor the master of the vessel are cognizant of the kind goods conveyed, which, indeed, are seldom addressed to any one, and *never acknowledged*. In many instances yarns of considerable value have been permitted to rot just because no warrant of sale could be obtained. The remedy is so easy as to require no observation.

" Section 14.—In place of fixing the punishment as in this section, I would, as formerly noticed, state the punishment in the section where the crime is declared.

" Section 19.—Here again the complaint on oath is brought into view, and on it the justices are empowered to grant a warrant to apprehend. As already observed, I would abolish the oath altogether, and give the justices the power either

either to issue a warrant to apprehend, or to cite the offender on a short *inducia*. In some cases apprehension is the best mode of proceeding, but in others it is unnecessary.

" Section 20.—The power of appeal, *which is only given to the accused by this section*, is positively hostile to the ends of justice, in so far as it effectually defeats the warrant of distress. Where a warrant of distress is granted, all the accused has to do is, to take an appeal, and lodge a recognizance by a sufficient cautioner. This it is an easy matter to procure, as he has generally plenty of money, and puts the amount of the penalty into the hands of a responsible acquaintance, who immediately signs the recognizance. *The obligation of the cautioner is discharged by producing the person of the appellant at the appeal court.*

" The appellant thus gains time to dispose of his whole effects; and although the judgment be affirmed at the quarter sessions, the warrant of distress is of no avail, and the delinquent goes to prison, glad to save the penalty by suffering incarceration. The consequence is, that the complainer pays the costs, which average in each case 10 *l.*

" Now although I would by no means take away the power of appeal, I would only give that priviledge under such conditions as would, in some measure, prevent the consequences alluded to. For this purpose, I would make the cautioner always liable under his recognizance to produce the *person of the appellant* at the bar of the appeal court, under the penalty of satisfying the conviction, *and also under the penalty of* 10 *l. sterling to defray costs should the judgment* be AFFIRMED. In this way the expenses would be secured; or a more effectual security would be, to make the cautioner liable for the whole penalty in case the judgment was affirmed. This would not prevent appeals, but it would tend to lessen the crime.

" It will further be observed, that this section gives no power of appeal to the complainer, and yet the instances are by no means few where the justices have acquitted a prisoner in the face of the clearest evidence, merely because he did not happen to be notorious as a dealer in such articles, although long known to the fiscal as such. In such cases, if the prosecutor had had a power of appeal, the ultimate issue would have been different. In all and every case the prosecutor should have this privilege.

" Section 21.—A form of conviction which this section provides is at all times inconvenient. The form of Scotch procedure does not require it, as the judgment could easily be made clear and distinct without any *set form*, any deviation from which, by mistake or otherwise, only leads to disputes and after-litigation.

" I have thus briefly adverted to such enactments in the statute as I humbly conceive may be amended with advantage. If the time had permitted, I might have been more minute in the proposed alterations. Should a Bill be brought into Parliament to amend the present law, I may perhaps have an opportunity of seeing it, when I may again trouble you with such remarks as occur to me. I would only suggest, in the meantime, that any Act of Parliament on this subject, as applicable to Scotland, should be couched in the phraseology of the legal practice of that country, and where a mode of diligence is introduced unknown to that practice, that the mode of executing that diligence should be succinctly laid down without (as hitherto) referring to English practice, which is generally unknown.

" I may further observe, that although the alterations suggested would have the effect of making the law work better, I have no confidence that the crime could be put down. The temptation to commit the offences is great, from the profitable nature of the traffic. I am far from certain that any crime is attentively looked after where the statute confers the power of prosecution on any person who chooses to complain, and yet to confide that duty to the procurators fiscal is attended with difficulty, inasmuch as a fund would be required to pay costs. To tax the manufacturers for such a fund might not be agreeable, and any attempt to make the funds of the counties liable would be resisted; while, on the other hand, the Government might object to bear the burthen. It appears clear to me, however, that until some such fund is provided, the traffic can never be put down.

" Maybole, 7 June 1838." " *W. Andrews*,
" Procurator Fiscal."

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Report from *J. C. Symons*, Esq.

Further Documentary Evidence on Embezzlement of Weft.

The following letter, with queries, was addressed by the Committee of Manufacturers to the Superintendents of Police; and the queries, re-copied, with the annexed answers, as inserted below, were received in reply:—

"The committee appointed to devise means for checking the theft, purloining and embezzlement of manufactured goods and manufacturing materials, and of other kinds of property, will feel obliged, if Captain Jeffrey will subjoin answers to the following queries; and, as the answers are to be submitted to the Lord Advocate, the committee beg that, before giving them, he will subject them to his calm and deliberate consideration.

"Queries.	Answers of Captain Jeffrey, Superintendent of Police in Gorbals of Glasgow.
"1st. Is the amount of property stolen, purloined or embezzled from cotton-spinning and manufacturing concerns in the west of Scotland, great or small?	It is very great, and, to give some idea of the extent in which this traffic is carried on, I may state, without fear of contradiction, that some extensive manufacturing establishments in Glasgow suffer loss, in this way, to the extent of 1,000*l.* per annum at least; and to my certain knowledge the purchases of goods made partly from embezzled materials, by two establishments in Glasgow, amount annually to upwards of 31,000*l.*; and these purchases are made generally at a price from 10 to 15 per cent. below what the same description of goods can be made by a regular manufacturer.
"2d. Is the theft, purloining and embezzlement of such property, encouraged, and promoted by re-setters or receivers, who purchase such goods and materials at an under value, without asking questions?	I have found that on examining the thieves, purloiners or embezzlers of materials, that they are not only encouraged but urged by the re-setters, who receive the said materials at about one-third or one quarter of the real value, without asking questions.
"3d. Do you believe that such purchasers are frequently aware, or at least have a strong suspicion, that such property is dishonestly come by, at the time they purchase it?	I have no doubt whatever that the purchasers are perfectly aware that the materials are dishonestly come by.
"4th. Have you had any experience in Glasgow, or in Paisley, in prosecuting, and in endeavouring to obtain convictions of such re-setters and receivers of stolen, purloined and embezzled property?	For the last 13 years, with the exception of about 18 months, I have been employed as superintendent of the Paisley, and latterly of the Gorbals police establishments, and in my capacity as such, innumerable cases of this description have come under my notice; and I may add that in one year, while in Paisley, I obtained upwards of 60 convictions under the Act 17 Geo. 3, c. 56; but, during that period, my sole attention was devoted to that particular object.
"5th. Judging from your own experience, are you of opinion that the existing laws of Scotland afford sufficient facilities for convicting re-setters and receivers of stolen, purloined and embezzled property, to enable you and others entrusted with their practical enforcement to repress such offences?	I am of opinion that, in many respects, the existing laws of Scotland are defective, and leave delinquents many loopholes to get out by; but these defects, I conceive, could be easily remedied by a proper and respectful representation to the Crown officers.
"6th. Are you of opinion, that the criminal practices of re-setting and receiving stolen, purloined and embezzled manufactured goods, and manufacturing materials are at present, for the most part, carried on, not only with impunity, but even with almost perfect security, from being punished by the existing laws?	I am of opinion that this query may be answered in the affirmative, arising principally from the difficulty and expense in obtaining convictions under the existing statutes.

" Queries.	Answers of Captain Jeffrey, Superintendent of Police in Gorbals of Glasgow.
" 7th If the trades of re-setting and receiving stolen, purloined and embezzled property were suppressed, what effect would that have in diminishing the crimes of theft, purloining and embezzlement?	Suppress re-setting, and you will diminish the crimes of theft, embezzlement and purloining very much.
" 8th. Are you of opinion, that the Bill, herewith sent, if passed into a law, would enable you and others entrusted with the detection and prosecution of criminals, to suppress the trades of re-setting and receiving stolen, purloined and embezzled property?	Since the receipt, I have not had an opportunity of weighing sufficiently in my mind the effects of the various enactments of the Bill; but as far as I can judge, if carried into effect, it would add much to the security of property, and the suppression of the evil complained of.
" 9th. Do you think that the said Bill, if passed into a law, could be in the slightest degree liable to abuse of any kind?	I do not think so.

" Police Chambers, Gorbals,
" 26 Dec. 1836."

" *George Jeffrey.*"

" Queries.	Answers of Captain Miller, Superintendent of Police in the Royalty of Glasgow.
" 1st. Is the amount of property stolen, purloined or embezzled from cotton-spinning and manufacturing concerns in the west of Scotland, great or small?	Taking into account, not only the city and its suburbs, but also the various towns from 15 to 20 miles round, the property stolen, purloined or embezzled must be very considerable; and the loss sustained by the manufacturing establishments must, I feel confident, amount to an incredible sum.
" 2d. Is the theft, purloining and embezzlement of such property encouraged and promoted by re-setters or receivers, who purchase such goods and materials, at an under value, without asking questions?	From the facilities afforded thieves, in the disposal of stolen, purloined and embezzled property by re-setters, who, generally speaking, ask no questions, great encouragement is given to the commission of crime. Embarrass the re-setter, by throwing impediments in his way, and thefts will decrease. One-third of the value is not paid for such goods and materials.
' 3d. Do you believe that such purchasers are frequently aware, or at least have a strong suspicion, that such property is dishonestly come by, at the time they purchase it?	In many instances, I do.
" 4th. Have you had any experience in Glasgow in prosecuting, and in endeavouring to obtain, convictions against such re-setters and receivers of stolen, purloined and embezzled property?	All cases prosecuted under the Act 17 Geo. 3, c. 56, are tried by the justices only. Although well acquainted with the procedure under this Act, I have not had the experience of prosecuting and obtaining convictions against the re-setters alluded to.
" 5th. Judging from your own experience, are you of opinion, that the existing laws of Scotland afford sufficient facilities for convicting re-setters and receivers of stolen, purloined and embezzled property, to enable you and others, entrusted with their practical enforcement, to suppress such offenders?	In many respects the existing laws are defective. In the justice of the peace court, most of the cases regarding the embezzlement, &c. of manufacturing materials are tried. The prosecutions are carried on in name of the private party and at his expense, which, together with the hazard of prosecutions by actions of damages, deter many parties from prosecuting; from this cause thieves and re-setters are encouraged in their dishonest practices.
" 6th. Are you of opinion, that the criminal practices of re-setting and receiving stolen, purloined or embezzled manufactured goods and manufacturing materials, are at present, for the most part, carried on, not only with impunity, but even almost with perfect security from being punished by the existing laws?	I am.

" 7th. If

Suppress

South of Scotland.

Report from *J. C. Symons*, Esq.

" Queries.	Answers of Captain Milller, Superintendent of Police in the Royalty of Glasgow.
" 7th. If the trade of re-setting stolen, purloined and embezzled property were suppressed, what effect would that have in diminishing the crimes of theft, purloining and embezzlement?	Suppress the trade of re-setting, and theft will, to a certainty, be considerably diminished.
" 8th. Are you of opinion, that the Bill herewith sent, if passed into a law, would enable you and others, entrusted with the detection and prosecution of criminals, to suppress the trades of re-setting and receiving stolen, purloined and embezzled property?	I have perused the Bill, and believe that several of its clauses, if passed into a law, will add considerably to the security of property.
" 9th. Do you think that the said Bill, if passed into a law, could be in the slightest degree liable to abuse of any kind?	As I speak only to several of its clasuses, I cannot take it upon myself to pass an opinion as to any abuse which might result from the Bill being passed into a law.

" Police Chambers, Glasgow,
" 29 Dec. 1836."

" *H. Miller*, S. P."

Written Evidence of Mr. *Galloway*, of Lanark, Agent, on Embezzlement.

" Sir, Lanark, 21 July 1838.

" When in Lanark, you stated that you wished my opinion as to the best method of putting an end to, or at least in some measure checking, the embezzlement of materials entrusted to weavers: I consider it absolutely necessary that parties guilty of this crime should be prosecuted at the public expense, in the same way as those guilty of crimes of a similar nature. Until this is done, there never will be any effectual stop put to the too general practice of stealing weft, and selling it again at *half its value*, to *small* manufacturers, who are thus enabled in some measure to undersell capitalists who are desirous of keeping up the wages of the weavers at a fair rate, in so far as in their power to do so; and, moreover, the means of underselling these respectable houses are in a great measure procured at their own expense, as the materials are stolen from them. Unless the embezzlement of weft is carried on to a great extent, it is almost impossible to detect it in such a manner as to obtain a conviction against the guilty parties; but this only renders it the more imperative, that prompt and decisive measures should be adopted when the crime *is* detected. The parties guilty of pilfering materials, are of course the most abandoned characters (principally those employed to wind weft), who will not work if they can find the means of living otherwise; and in almost every case it is utterly impossible to get them to reimburse the value of what they steal: indeed, I see no means, in a general point of view, of obtaining any indemnification, either to the manufacturer, or for the expense of prosecution; and I consider the only remedy which can be applied with any chance of success, is to visit the guilty with a most prompt and severe punishment,—not a *nominal* one, as is *too often the case*, but a *bonâ fide* one, and thus secure the grand object of all punishment, that of 'deterring others from committing the like crime on all times coming.' In some particular cases, a fine to cover the expense of prosecution might be recovered, but they are very rare; the most that can be expected in the generality of cases is, that those found guilty should be made to support themselves by hard labour during the time of their confinement in prison: the party against whom the crime is committed has often not sufficient interest to prosecute any individual culprit at his own expense, and his doing so, would often prevent a conviction following, as his evidence is frequently the most material: I therefore consider it of the utmost importance, that all prosecutions should follow at the instance of the public prosecutor, and I do not see why any distinction should be made between this and any other species of crime; but I confess that I am not prepared to condescend upon any particular mode of procedure. It would be most difficult to suggest any plan to apply to all cases; but the more summary the proceedings, and the more prompt the punishment, there is the greater chance of the crime being checked. It is almost unnecessary to add, that

that the embezzlement of materials militates greatly against the honest and industrious tradesman.

"I have the honour to be, sir,

"Your most obedient servant,

"J. C. Symons, esq." "*Robert Galloway.*"

STATEMENT from Mr. *Mann*, Chief Constable for Ayrshire.

"CONVICTIONS for embezzling Cotton Yarn, contrary to Act of Parliament, 17 Geo. 3, c. 56, s. 10.

"Conviction of *Charles Haining* (materials sold.)

"Seized on the South Quay of Ayr a sack full of cotton-yarn of various colours and kinds, belonging to the above Charles Haining, weaver and hawker, in Ayr, which was about to be shipped on board of one of our steamers for Glasgow. 1835, October.

"He was convicted before two justices of the peace in the statutory penalty of 20*l.*, or to be imprisoned in Ayr gaol for one month. No goods belonging to him could be found to recover the penalty, and of course he was imprisoned. The materials were sold to pay expenses. 112 lbs.

"Conviction of *James Murdoch* (materials sold.)

"Seized on the cart of the above James Murdoch, carter in Maybole, a bag full of cotton-yarns, and some coops. 1836, August.

"Murdoch refused to tell who gave him the bag, nor would he satisfy the justices how he came by it, for which he was fined 20*l.*, or one month's imprisonment.

"The penalty could not be recovered, neither has he been put in gaol. Materials were sold. 50 lbs.

"Information sent to Glasgow.

"Sent word to Captain Jeffrey, of the Gorbals police, of two sacks full of embezzled yarns, going by one of the steamers; it was seized in Glasgow, but the owner having heard of it, did not appear. This lot came from Girvan: I believe it was sold to pay expenses. 1836, October. 224 lbs.

"Conviction of *Charles Haining*, in Glasgow.

"Sent word to Captain Jeffrey of the above C. Haining sending a quantity of embezzled cotton-yarn by the carrier to Glasgow. He was apprehended in Glasgow, with the yarn in his possession, and convicted: this being his second offence, was fined in 30*l.*, or two months' imprisonment. No effects could be got, and was put in Glasgow bridewell for the above period. 1836, December. 80 lbs.

"Information sent to Glasgow.

"Sent word to Captain Jeffrey, of a considerable quantity of embezzled cotton-yarn going to Glasgow by the Maybole carrier. It was seized in the house of a Mrs. Humphrey, in Glasgow, who was convicted in the usual penalty. The justices in Glasgow considered her rather as a cloak to some other person, and, at their suggestion, she was not imprisoned. Materials sold. 1837, January. 150 lbs.

"Conviction of *John M'Adam.*

"Seized on the cart of John M'Adam, carter, Maybole, a sackful of embezzled cotton-yarn, some coops, and 112 heads of worsted or Thibet yarn. M'Adam would not satisfy the justices how he came by it, and therefore was fined in 20*l.*, or to be imprisoned for one month. No effects could be got to recover the penalty, nor has he been put in gaol. Materials were sold. 1837, December. 112 lbs.

"Conviction of *Hugh Alexander.*

"Seized in the house of Hugh Alexander, dealer in old clothes in Maybole, two sacks full of embezzled cotton-yarn, of all colours and kinds, and a small quantity of Thibet yarn, and four boxes of coops. Conviction followed, with the usual penalty, and the materials were sold. This is the only case that has paid trouble and expense, owing to the quantity of materials found. 1838, Feb. 24. 336 lbs.

"Five

South of Scotland.

Report from *J. C. Symons*, Esq.

"Five pounds of the penalty have only been paid.

"The other cases being a less quantity of materials, I was always a loser, having no recourse for my expenses but against the proceeds of the sale of the materials. The statute is so difficult and expensive to operate on, and the punishment, viz., fine or imprisonment, so disproportionate, that not one out of ten will pay the fine; where the fine is paid, one-half goes to the poor of the parish, and the other to the prosecutor.

1837.

"A very large quantity of embezzled yarn and coops were seized on a carrier's cart in Ayr, from the neighbourhood of Maybole, going to Glasgow in the year 1837. No person claimed it, and no conviction followed. The materials were

336 lbs.

sold by order of the justices. I was not directly concerned in this case, but I know it for a fact.

"I have underrated, when I say that 1,400 lbs. of embezzled cotton-yarns, &c., have been seized going back to Glasgow, from October 1835 to February 1838, and what must the quantity have been that has eluded me, and actually been sold there.

"From my own observations, I think it is the weaver who embezzles more than the pirn-winders; as I have seen, in searches made in some of their houses, two, and sometimes three, webs or chains, and not one pound of weft to work the web; and likewise, the quantity of coops or pirns, which never goes into any person's possession but the weavers, which has been seized, shows that the weaver is the principal purloiner of cotton-yarn.

"*Rob^t, Mann*, C. C. for Ayrshire."

"County Buildings, Ayr, 29 May 1838."

WRITTEN EVIDENCE (supplementary) from *F. Finlayson*, Esq.

"Sir, Glasgow, 27 March 1838.

"In my examination yesterday, I fear that, on account of my not being quite so collected as I might have been had I been aware of the topics on which I should be examined, I may have left a wrong impression on your mind with respect to the extent to which the embezzlement of weft is carried on, and the effect it has on the manufacturer. I mentioned, that when a weaver ran short of weft on account of its being improperly used, and we had to supply him with a fresh quantity, we charged him the price of it; and I am afraid you think that it is only to the extent of what is thus charged, that weft is embezzled.

"But this is only a very small portion of the quantity embezzled; for although we can tell whether or not the quantity of weft we allow is returned on the web, yet when we do complain that it is not, we are invariably met with complaints of the great quantity of waste in winding it on the pirns, arising from the material being bad, or spoiled in bleaching or dyeing; so that although we are convinced the web is a little thinner than it ought to be, yet if it be otherwise well woven, we are obliged to let it pass; in this way one or two spindles may be taken from a web for which 30 spindles of weft are allowed.

"It is thus the fair manufacturer is injured; first, by having his work made thinner than it ought to be, and next, by the weft of which he is unjustly deprived being afterwards turned into goods, and sold at a lower rate than he can possibly afford to make them.

"I have to thank you for the gentlemanly manner in which you conducted my examination.

"I am, sir,

"To J. C. Symons, Esq." "Your obedient servant,

"*Francis Finlayson.*"

South of Scotland.

Report from *J. C. Symons*, Esq.

STATEMENT of the Quantity of WEFT required for the following kinds of Weaving at present in the Looms in *Bridewell*, where embezzlement is impossible.

"For a 10°° check	- -	51	porter	-	150	ells	-	14	shots	-	33 sps.
„ 10°° cross-over	-	50	ditto	-	210	do.	-	12	do.	-	40 do.
„ 10°° tweel	- -	44	ditto	-	200	do.	-	10	do.	-	30 do.
„ 10°° check	- -	45½	ditto	-	150	do.	-	14	do.	-	30 do.
„ 15°° ginghams	-	42	ditto	-	147½	do.	-	15	do.	-	30 do.
„ 7°° robe	- - -	32	ditto	-	203	do.	-	7	do.	-	22 do.
„ 7°° romal	- -	32½	ditto	-	203	do.	-	7	do.	-	22¼ do.
, 8°° check	- -	37½	ditto	-	203	do.	-	8	do.	-	26 do.

"11 May 1838."

"Reported by *William Brebner*, Governor."

CONCLUSION.

Summary of Report.

Thus the general conclusions to which my inquiry has led are, that a considerable state of depression in the cotton districts exists, and, with slight variations, has continued to exist since the termination of the war; whilst for many years prior to that period, subject to some fluctuations, hand-loom weaving ranked among the best-paid trades.

That the older branches of the weavers are a highly educated, moral and intelligent class, whilst the younger are in all respects inferior.

That the education of the children is so deficient, that the next generation will grow up in comparative ignorance.

The proximate causes of a depression so sudden in its origin, and continuous in its operation, appear to be the excess of labourers over the natural demand for labour. The causes which have tended to diminish the demand for, and those which have tended to increase the supply of, labour, have operated like chain-shot in cutting down the rate of wages.

The corn-laws and the peculiar accessibility of the weaving trade being the causes of each class most instrumental in the depression.

There appears no prospect whatever that the weaving trade will improve. The power-loom is applicable to many fabrics which the exceedingly low rate of wages alone enables the hand-loom to retain. Without the stimulus of additional profit to the improvement of power-loom mechanism, 16°° Jaconets one shot under, warp No. 90, and weft No. 110, are weaving by power in the factory of Messrs. Monteith & Hamilton, at Blantyre; these webs are well and evenly made.

There exist therefore, in addition to its accessibility, cogent reasons why *hand-loom weaving, as a trade, is incapable of material improvement*; for were the power-looms even abolished, hand-loom weavers must necessarily participate to a greater extent in the general impoverishment to the community which this would cause, than they could possibly gain by the increased demand for their individual industry, which would be deluged with hands thrown out of employment elsewhere; and this would have been equally the case had the power-loom never been invented.

The repeal of the corn-laws would, unquestionably, confer a great benefit on the existing generation of hand-loom weavers. Its chief beneficial effects on them would be to increase the demand for labour, and open trades which the insufficiency of demand keeps combined; *it would thus enable deserving men to quit the lower branches of hand-loom weaving, which would be either annihilated by the power-loom, or left to those who do not desire or deserve to rise.* The skilled departments of hand-loom weaving, to which power cannot be applied, would participate in the benefit of increased trade, and would become either the only branch remaining, or the only one respectably handed.

The great grievance of the condition of the weavers consists not so much in lowness of wages, for there must always be some trade where wages are lower than in others, but in the fact that men of merit and talent who have experienced, and still deserve, better fortunes, should, by a combination of circumstances, have become enchained to a trade which is daily sinking them lower in the depths of destitution, and from which they have not the power of escape.

South of Scotland.

Report from *J. C. Symons*, Esq.

To the deserving weavers, then, the repeal of the corn-laws would give deliverance from the hardship of their condition, whilst to the welfare of our growing population, and the maintenance of our commercial supremacy among nations, it is daily becoming more indispensably vital. Before this great measure of salvation to the commercial interests of the Empire and the prosperity of the whole people, all other measures of palliation sink into insignificance; and as none other would effectually relieve their distress compatibly with the general interest of the community, there are none (specifically applicable to hand-loom weavers) of which I can recommend the adoption.

I have the honour to be, gentlemen,
With high respect,
Your very obedient servant,

Helensburgh, Dumbartonshire,
16 August 1838.

Jelinger C. Symons, B. A.
Assistant Commissioner.

POSTSCRIPT.

I have lately met with Mr. H. Fyfe, one of the largest manufacturers of hand-loom pullicates, &c. in Glasgow, who informs me that wages have risen since I was there in about the following proportion :—

	August 1838.	December 1838.
Pullicates, 13^{00} $^{4}/_{4}$ were paid - -	2 $\frac{1}{4}$ *d.* per yard	3 *d.* per yard.
Ditto - 16^{00} „ - - -	3 $\frac{1}{4}$ *d.* „	3 $\frac{1}{2}$ „
Ditto 18^{00} „ - - -	3 $\frac{3}{4}$ *d.* to 4 *d.* -	unchanged.

The causes assigned for this rise, are the continual increase of demand for the mousselines de laines, a light woollen fabric, which the cotton weavers can easily weave, and also the railway from Edinburgh to Glasgow and from Glasgow to Ayr; that is to say, an increased local demand for labour has arisen, of which the weavers have been, many of them, wise enough to avail themselves.

1 February 1839.

J. C. S.

REPORT from JELINGER C. SYMONS, Esq. on *France*, *Belgium*, *Switzerland*, and Part of *Austria*.

To Her Majesty's COMMISSIONERS of INQUIRY into the Condition of the HAND-LOOM WEAVERS.

Gentlemen,

Extent and nature of Mission.

As soon as the requisite authorization of Her Majesty's Government was obtained, and I had concluded my Report for Scotland, I proceeded, at your request, with the same instructions I had there followed, to execute a similar investigation in France, Switzerland, Belgium, and part of the Austrian dominions. Those instructions did not confine my inquiry to the moral and physical condition of the hand-loom weavers alone, but enjoined its extension to that "of all the other labouring classes in the community;" whilst I was directed "to trace all the facts I established to their causes, immediate and remote." My mission abroad, therefore, instead of a comparatively jejune inquiry into the circumstances of an individual handicraft, became an unlimited investigation into the state of the industrial classes at large, involving in the explanation of that state, an examination into the international commercial policy, as well as the relations between labour and capital established in the internal economy of each country. It was, in fact, a mission demanding the application of the entire principles of moral philosophy and political economy, in order to solve phenomena, and generalise facts, which it required considerable exertion, in the first place, to collect. I remind you of the magnitude of the task committed to me, and the comparatively short time assigned me to discharge it in, as a claim on your indulgence towards the deficiencies which I am well aware you will not fail to detect in the Report I am about to lay before you. The effective facilities I have enjoyed in the prosecution of my labours, encourage me in the belief that I have succeeded nevertheless in gathering sufficient information to enable me to present you with a view of the subject sufficiently comprehensive to be useful: whilst the sources from which they are chiefly drawn, attest the authenticity of my facts. Though my opinions have been formed from *personal investigation*, both in cottages and factories, and by comparison with my experiences at home; the best individual exertion would have failed to accomplish the same amount of inquiry, unaided by the assistance of persons locally conversant with the objects of my mission. I cannot, therefore, over estimate the aid I have derived from the numerous and excellent introductions with which I was furnished at home, and the zealous and cordial co-operation of Her Majesty's Ambassador and Ministers at Paris, Brussels and Berne, the Minister of Public Works and Commerce in France, and the Prefects to whose local attention he recommended me. My cordial acknowledgments are likewise due for the willing spirit and enlightened liberality with which foreigners of all classes ministered to my researches. The necessity for concealing from manufacturers the official character of my inquiries but rarely occurred. On the contrary, my mission was almost everywhere viewed (to borrow the words of one of the introductory letters of the Prefect du Nord) as "one wholly without sinister motive—perfectly in harmony with the bonds of friendship which unite the two Nations, and one which could occasion no just umbrage to the manufacturers of France."

Powers and mode of Inquiry.

In Belgium I had, among others, letters of introduction from the King's private Secretary, through the good offices of his Excellency Sir Hamilton Seymour, to whose zealous aid the Commission is the more indebted, from the comparative difficulty which attended the attainment of information such as I required from the manufacturers of that country; in fact, the few difficulties I encountered occurred exclusively in Belgium.

His Excellency Mr. Morier furnished me with several introductions in Switzerland, which, aided by the frank and liberal character of its inhabitants, rendered that country the easiest sphere of my labours. I did not deem it expedient to

 trouble

Switzerland.

Report from *J. C. Symons*, Esq.

Subject-matter of Report.

trouble Her Majesty's Ambassador at Vienna for any facilities to my inquiry in Austria.

In the following Report I have endeavoured to embody the fruits of my entire investigation. A good deal of information as to the progress of manufactures, totally apart from hand-loom weaving, came necessarily within my reach; and, so far from considering it my duty to reject it, as impertinent to the more immediate object of my mission, I only wish that the time and means allowed me for my labours had permitted me to present you with a far more voluminous and ramified detail of a subject so important to this country as that of the progress of foreign manufactures. And I shall be greatly rejoiced if, through your recommendation, the results of my observations should anywise tend to that elaborate investigation into this matter on the part of the Legislature, which, with justice to the commercial interests of this Kingdom, cannot be longer delayed.

I must, before I enter on the subject itself, beg respectfully to assure you, that in the entire investigation, both as relates to the wages and condition of the artisans, and the progress of production itself, I carefully dismissed from my mind all prepossessions on the subject. My single aim has been to learn, and is now to report, the truth. I do not conceal from myself that the results of an inquiry such as this may be liable to aid the cause, and to be enlisted into the service of class or party interests. However this may be, I shall produce facts as I found them, without the slightest consideration as to what party they may please or displease. In this course I feel assured of your approval.

The order and arrangement I have chosen, is that of giving all the particulars collected in each place seriatim in the same country; with a digest, when necessary, before proceeding to another country. In fact, the circumstances of the industry, for instance, of France and Switzerland, present features so widely dissimilar, that it would be impossible to give a general account of both together. I have taken countries and places, for the most part, in the order in which they were visited.

SWITZERLAND.

Canton of Berne.

Fabrics.

This canton does not hold a first-rate rank among the manufacturing cantons of Switzerland. With the exception of a few manufacturers of taffetas and mixed silk stuffs, there is little other weaving here besides that of damasks. These have, of late, grown into some extent, and are almost entirely woven at Walkringen, and the neighbourhood.

Damasks.

I had a long conversation with Colonel Geisbühler, the director of the *postes*, who has a large interest in the manufactures of the linen goods. From him and others I learnt, that in napkins and table-cloths the Bernese looms rival those of Belgium; and that they have latterly sold, owing to their lower prices, no inconsiderable quantity of their goods in the latter country. Much of the yarn comes from England. I saw, amongst other samples, some damask cloth 33 inches wide, 2,800 chains in the breadth, over wefted, the pattern 3 inches square; the workmanship was slightly inferior to similar goods at Dumfermline or Courtray; the wholesale price averaged 3 *f.* (2*s.* 6 *d.*) per French aune of 44 inches. A large quantity of trowser-pieces of twilled duck, and some with woollen weft, are made also; of which the prices wholesale averaged 36 French francs for 60 aunes of 44 inches each. These are exported, to some extent, to South America.

Wages.

The damask weavers earned, at Walkringen, *net weekly wages* (average), as follows:—

	f.	*c.*		*s.*	*d.*
For first-class damasks, best weavers -	10	-	=	8	4
Second-class ditto (napkins) - - -	8	50	=	7	1
Plain shirting, &c. - - - - -	7	-	=	5	10

These

These latter are only woven in the intervals of other employment, or by women, children, and old people. Few support themselves on this work alone.

The condition of the weavers is exceedingly good; they not only possess all the comforts of their class in life, but, excepting merely the cases where a large and *young* family has to be provided for, considerable savings are amassed by them.

The price of food and lodging is so moderate in the neighbourhood of Langenthal, that an adult is able to support himself with ease at sixpence per day.

The rate of wages was formerly higher per piece, but the increased aptitude of the workmen, and the corresponding progress in the invention of more costly designs, has fully compensated to him the diminished standard of his wages: their amount, therefore, per week, has been stationary for at least ten years. The morals of the Langenthal weavers are equal to those of any other class; they are sober, frugal and peaceable. Their children are, of course, educated according to the universal law and custom of the country.

In comparing them with other classes, if they can be called a class, I should say, the fancy weavers were here, as well as elsewhere in Switzerland, above rather than below the standard of other artisans, and especially in regard to the duty of educating their children.

The canton of Berne is admirably supplied with schools, both primary and secondary. There is also a School of Arts, established about ten years ago, where tradesmen and artisans are instructed gratuitously in their various provinces, and where lectures in the evening are given in orthography, composition, arithmetic and geography.

Prison of Berne.

I visited the prison at Berne, containing 320 prisoners. This establishment is admirably conducted, though there are others in Switzerland, at Lausanne, &c., equally good, if not better. It is much on the same system as the Bridewell at Glasgow, all the prisoners being employed at some handicraft. There were tailors, shoemakers, carpenters, &c. &c., all employed at their own occupation, and several in a large weaving factory. The cleanliness and order preserved in this establishment left nothing to desire. Two differences existed, worth notice, between this and the Glasgow Bridewell: one is, that the prisoners work, for the most part, together at the Berne Bridewell, instead of in separate cells, as at Glasgow. Perfect silence is preserved, however. The other chief difference is, that in addition to a large workshop, apart from the prison, for those who work as carpenters and cabinet-makers, a certain number, both of men and women, are daily selected in rotation to perform out-door work, which is paid for as job-work by the farmers. The payment, together with the proceeds of the internal industry of the prison, go to defray its expenses. The prisoners are marched in bands to the country, and perform, in fact, any out-door work that offers, under the guard of soldiers. I have frequently, in the interior of Germany, seen men-convicts sweeping the streets; but women are, I believe, not so generally employed in out-door labour.

Out-door Labour of Prisoners.

M. Tscharner, the avoyer of Berne, told me that he was somewhat doubtful as to the efficacy of the system of employing prisoners out of doors. His chief reason appeared to be, that the diet and treatment was so good, that the public display of such well-looking, plump prisoners, was little calculated to inspire a salutary awe of "durance vile." The fact is, that the system pursued at the Berne Bridewell of regular exercise, wholesome food, well-ventilated rooms, early rising, cleanliness, and total abstinence from spirituous liquors, necessarily constitutes a *regime* for the promotion of health as perfect and effective as it is well possible to devise. I cannot, however, subscribe to the apprehension of the worthy avoyer. The love of liberty is sufficiently strong in the affections even of the *vagabonds* of Switzerland to render the situation of a prisoner, however plump, one of almost universal aversion. Neither is it any answer to remark, that occasionally a prisoner, when emancipated, commits a crime at Berne, for the purpose of being re-committed. A person once imprisoned in a country like Switzerland, where high moral rectitude of feeling is so general among the people, loses caste, and frequently the means of employment; at any rate, the disgrace of imprisonment is no longer a punishment to be avoided, but an

Switzerland.

Report from *J. C. Symons*, Esq.

infliction already incurred, and from which it is impossible to escape,—I allude, of course, to prisoners who have committed some disgraceful act, and who could alone be supposed to envy the diet of a prison.

I believe the plan of employing prisoners in some profitable industry to be worthy of the most extensive imitation. I could not help contrasting the admirable school of industry presented by the busy artisans in the prison at Berne, with the pernicious indolence of the well-fed paupers in Bledlow workhouse. I believe no possible benefit can atone for the flagrant injury done, by inuring persons kept at the public expense to idleness. The mind is enervated, and the powers of vitality are corroded, by the unnatural and intense slothfulness induced by cooping up a man within a small space, who has nothing to do. Many people exclaim against allowing paupers or prisoners to be industrious; and justify the addition of indolent habits to the infliction of loss of liberty, by a regard for the interest of the independent labourer out of doors. This seems to me very mistaken economy. Neither workhouses nor prisons can be supported but at a heavy expense. The rates or imposts which defray it, must proceed from the capital of the country, or, what is the same thing, the fund for the employment of labour; but if by rendering prisons and workhouses places of industry instead of idleness, prisons and workhouses are made to support themselves, it is evident that capital, or the fund for employing independent labour, is relieved to the same amount; and that it will be the same thing to independent labourers whether they share the increased sources of employment with prisoners and paupers, or whether they monopolise the employment, of which the sources are diminished by the burthen of idle poorhouses and unproductive prisons.

The real fact is, however, that it is, in the long run, *better* for the independent labourer that prisons and poorhouses should be productive, seeing that the wealth or capital of a country is exactly proportioned to the sum total of its productions; the share of the labourer depending, not on the smallness of the number of *hands working*, but of mouths eating.

Canton of Argovia.

Fabrics.

The chief manufactures of Argovia are those of silks and ribbons, cotton-spinning, tissues (*i. e.* woven goods) of cottons, chiefly such as pullicates and coarse ginghams, of domestic use, of which large quantities are exported to Hamburgh, Frankfort and America.

The hand-loom is in general use in this canton.

Wages of Hand-loom Weavers.

It must be here remarked, that hand-loom weavers, such as we are accustomed to in the North of England and Scotland, who work at their loom from morning to night, and from January to January, exist scarcely at all in Switzerland. The hand-loom weaver of Switzerland is almost universally either an agricultural servant, or himself the proprietor of land. Even the very journeymen work at the loom only when their labour could be less advantageously employed out of doors. The almost infinitessimal division of land, and the immense number of small proprietors, added to the frugality of the Swiss peasant, and his general desire to possess land, render weaving, for the most part, *a secondary occupation*; resorted to at least by two-thirds of the whole number of the families in the weaving districts of the country. The coarser sort of work is generally performed by children.

I shall give these facts their due importance in the summary with which I shall conclude my remarks on Switzerland; but I name it here to account for the comparatively low rate of wages I am about to state.

The chief cotton article of hand-loom produce consists in ginghams, ranging in quality from 10^{oo} to 14^{oo}, that is, having from 2,000 to 2,800 chains in the width of 37$\frac{1}{4}$ inches (according to the Glasgow standard of measure, which I shall exclusively use in my statements.) I was shown, among a multitude of other articles, a 12^{oo} gingham, 30 inches in width, with Turkey red and white check. Chains about No. 30^{s} and weft 40^{s}, over-wefted in the proportion of 20 to 17; the weaving of this was 11*f.* for 82 French ells of 44 inches each; winding, and all et cæteras paid for by the weaver. The piece of 82 ells is usually woven in a fortnight; gross wages therefore on this work would be only 5*f.* 50*c.* per week (or 4*s.* 7*d.*), from which winding, say 7*d.*, has to be deducted, together with

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with all the incidental expenses to the weaver of upholding the loom, &c., for which deduct 1*s.* more, leaving 3*s.* per week net wages. The sale price of these ginghams wholesale (fast colours) averages about 9*d.* per French ell, or $7\frac{4}{11}d.$ per English yard; discount 10 per cent. for ready money.

A sort of striped ginghams are woven here a good deal for Italian cloaks (stripe in the weft) 12es cram, 45 inches wide: these goods are for printing on; wages paid for weaving are 27*f.* for 90 ells, of which six ells are considered a good day's work, making about 13*f.* 50*c.* or 10*s.* 10*d.* per fortnight gross wages. Price of these goods wholesale is 2*f.* 50*c.* per ell; discount 10 per cent.

These form the lowest class of wages in Switzerland, and are made in about 12 hours' actual labour per diem by children, or men advanced in life.

The rate of wages has greatly declined in cotton weaving; the Messrs. de Herzog, of Aarau, told me they had paid nine *sous* per ell for what they now pay two *sous*. This change has taken place within 25 years.

Silk Weavers' Wages.

The silk and ribbon weavers earn from seven to ten *batzen* per day (*i. e.* from 10*d.* to 1*s.* 3*d.*) These are gross wages, and leave about 6*s.* on an average clear for good workmen; but there are a large proportion who do not earn above 5*s.* The peculiarities which attend the silk weaving of Switzerland will be found explained in the canton of Zürich.

Straw Fabrics.

A large branch of the industry of Argovia is devoted to the production of straw and straw and silk articles, chiefly for the Italian and American markets. The wages paid for these do not materially differ from the above. The profits gained in the manufacture of these goods are exceedingly large, owing to improvements of recent date, and the comparative monopoly, as yet, of the trade in the hands of a few manufacturers.

Cotton Spinning.

There are several cotton spinning mills in Argovia, having 123,536 spindles.

Prices of Twist.

The prices of this production have fallen considerably here, as elsewhere. No. 40^{s} chain (mule twist) was sold in 1813 in Aarau for 7*f.* 20*c.* per English lb.; it is now 1*f.* 50*c.* per lb. The reduction has been thus in far greater proportion than even that of the cost of the raw material; for in 1813 cotton-wool of medium quality was 300*f.* per quintal, and now costs 108*f.* per quintal. The reduction in the price of twist having been in double proportion, proves the advance made in the aptitude of the workmen, and the perfection of machinery, though, in the *older* mills I visited, they are considerably behind us in mechanical improvements, independent of the quality of the machinery itself.

Wages in Cotton Mills.

The wages in the spinning-mills, and indeed in all the factories of the continent, exhibit one of the main distinctions between our own industrial position and that of our foreign competitors, and one to which I shall have occasion again largely to refer.

The wages in an average cotton-mill in Argovia were as follows:—

Spinner's average, 1*f.* 50*c.* per day = 1*s.* 3*d.* English.
Carder's average, 1*f.* per day = 10*d.*
Girls, piecers, &c. average 4*f.* 50*c.* per week, = 3*s.* 9*d.*
Power-loom weavers average 75*c.* per day = 7½*d.*

Hours of Work.

The hours of factory labour are from six to eleven, and from twelve to half-past seven.

Other Wages.

Journeymen carpenters, masons, &c. do not earn on an average above 1*s.* 4*d.* per day.

Physical condition of the manufacturing Labourers.

I have already stated that there are no hand-loom weavers such as ours in Switzerland; nor do their wages form any index to their condition. The price of provisions, which I shall note hereafter, will show how little costly are the commodities which are usually the staple articles of a labouring man's sustenance; and I ascertained that a journeyman weaver usually pays in Argovia from 18 to 20 *batzen* per week for his board and lodging; a sum not exceeding on the average 3*s.* sterling. But wages by no means form the whole income of a weaver. He is, as I have stated, almost universally the proprietor, or the son of a proprietor, of land, and few householders are there in the whole canton

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who do not keep a pig, and generally a few sheep. Their cottages are strewed over the hills and dales, and exhibit in the interior every degree of comfort and ease. Their meals are chiefly vegetable, but there is always plenty.

There are but very few paupers in this canton, compared with other countries. A regular fund is established for their relief.

Education.

Education is here, as elsewhere in Switzerland, compulsory. A council of seven members superintends the schools of this canton, which consist of nearly 300 primary schools, and a secondary school to each district of 120 children. A cantonal school for the instruction of artisans has been recently founded at Aarau, at the expense of two citizens, who gave, it is said, 75,000 Swiss francs for the purpose. It is under the direction of M. Tschokke ; and the subjects taught are arithmetic, mechanics, mathematics, chemistry, the elements of physics, drawing, designs, &c. &c.

Factory Labour.

In the cotton-mills the State limits the entrance of children, and allows none to be admitted under fourteen years of age. This is perhaps the most rigid law on this point in force. The mill-owners are obliged to educate the children they employ. I visited the school of the Messieurs de Herzog at Aarau, where reading, writing and arithmetic, are taught, as well as singing. The system of teaching appeared to be well conceived and effective. The expense devolved entirely on the manufacturer.

The working classes are well off in Argovia, but I do not consider it by any means the most prosperous canton in Switzerland.

Canton of Zurich.

Fabrics.

Since the fifteenth century, the silk manufactures of this canton have been known to Europe. The manufacture of ginghams and other cotton goods, as well as of worsteds and woollens, is also carried on to a considerable extent.

The silks are chiefly plain, and even those which are figured, are of a lighter texture than the produce of the Lyonnese looms, with which the Zürich manufacturers are in direct competition.

Wages and Prices of Silks.

At Hausen, which I visited for the purpose of investigating the silk manufactures in the country, I collected a great deal of information on the prices of weaving, and the fabrics themselves. I select the following :—

1. *Marcellines :* plain black silk 18^{oo} (*i. e.* having 3,600 chains in the width of 37¼ inches), width 31 inches ; wages 31*f.* for 60 ells. ; time four weeks ; making 7*f.* 50*c.* gross wages per week : wholesale price of these silks, 5*f.* 85*c.* per ell.

2. *Gros d'Orleans* 16$^{2^{oo}}$ thick warp and weft, width 31 inches. Turin organsine, chain 28 to 30. Milan weft 28^{s} to 36^{s} ; wages 40*f.* for 60 ells : average period of work 6 weeks, or 6*f.* 66*c.* gross wages per week : price 8*f.* 60*c.* per ell.

3. *Florentine* plain white silk, 18^{oo} (or 3,600 chains in 37¼ inches), 22 inches wide, single wefted (*tramé à un bout*). Weight of weft for whole piece 2 livres, 2 onces : do. do. chains of organzine 30 onces. Wages for whole piece 15*f.* ; time necessary, on average, to complete it, nearly three weeks, giving average gross wages 5*f.* per week : selling wholesale price 2*f.* 80*c.*

4. *Serge :* (silk) thin and fine, 22 inches wide ; wages 8*fl.* or 20*f.* for 52 ells woven in 3¼ weeks, or 23 days' labour, making 17½ *sous* per day, or 5*f.* average per week : price 3*f.* 50 *c.* per ell.

5. *Green Florentine :* 18^{oo}, single wefted, 17 inches wide : wages 9*f.* for 50 ells, requiring 2 weeks' labour, and giving average of 4*f.* 50 *c.* gross wages per week ; price 2*f.* per ell.

The beams are all warped by the manufacturer, who pays about 45 *kreutzers* per day (about 14*d.* English) for this operation, which, from the value of the material, is one requiring confidence in the workman.

Winding is paid also by the manufacturer at the rate of 30 *kreutzers* (10*d.*) per lb. for raw silks, and 11 *d.* for organsines. At this operation various wages are earned, some manufacturers having it done in their own houses, or paying as high as 8*f.* or 10*f.* to the woman who performs the work, and who is responsible for the material.

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One franc per week is considered a very fair reduction from the price of weaving to cover all outlay incurred by the weavers.

I visited in the neighbourhood of the town of Zürich one of the factories of hand-loom silk-weaving; I found the same wages paid by the manufacturer to the weavers in his factory, and to those out of it, although the former enjoy the advantage of having loom, light, firing, and winding, found for them. It is evidently to the interest of the manufacturer to do this, in order to preserve the privacy of his patterns; for the factory looms are always Jacquards, in which designs and figured silks are woven. The weavers, moreover, being obliged to devote themselves exclusively, or nearly so, to this occupation, require additional remuneration. Wages generally have been nearly stationary for 10 years. The gross wages of the multitude of weavers, whose cottages I visited in this canton, did not average more than 5*f.* 20*c.* per loom gross receipts; this was, however, taking young, old, skilled and unskilled altogether.

Women generally weave the silk articles, and men the cottons; the former requiring a dry room up stairs, and the latter being best manufactured in a cellar. Hours of labour when working average 13 hours actual work per day.

With regard to the physical condition of the hand-loom weavers, the above statement affords no index whatever. I cannot too often repeat, that there are no hand-loom weavers in Switzerland, except the fancy weavers, according in any respect with the idea we attach to the term.

The working classes, especially those who weave, are almost universally landed proprietors, or the children or the farm servants of landed proprietors. It is scarcely possible to enter a house in the country unfurnished with one or more looms; they are, to say the least of it, as common articles of furniture in Switzerland, as clocks are in England.

Sometimes women are not wanted in the fields, or the weather prevents any of the family from out-door labour; at such times you will hear the shuttle as you pass each cottage. When at other times hands are employed out of doors, three-fourths, if not five-sixths, of the looms are idle, whilst at particular seasons, such as harvest-time, not a weaver is to be found in doors.

Meals.

The meals of these semi-agricultural semi-manufacturing population are as good as they themselves desire; their clean and comfortable houses bespeak their easy circumstances, and they never seem at all disposed to complain of the very low rate of remuneration they receive.

Income of Swiss Families.

Most of the families, consisting of father and mother, and two or three children, (the usual complement) earn among them, or possess in the produce of their land, an income fully equal to 30*s.* per week in England. I take into account the difference in the price of provisions, and I assume, that two of the children are able to add to the income of the family; the eldest, one-half the amount of the father's earnings, and the younger one-third; and I am confident, that the amount of absolute commodities and comforts enjoyed by the Swiss family could not be bought under the sum I have named in England. Three-fourths of the families in Switzerland who would come under the class of independent labourers here, are *above*, rather than below, this estimate of income,—I speak of the cantons of Zürich, Appenzel and St. Gall. I shall recur to this point.

The cotton weaver's wages do not differ from those of Argovia.

Wages in Cotton Spinning.

This canton ranks first for the extent of its cotton spinning factories, which in 1836 had 292,916 spindles in activity; an increase of at least 10,000 spindles has taken place since. Mr. Gaspard Escher is the largest machine maker in Switzerland, and has self-acting mules in his establishment at Zürich. At Winterthur and elsewhere in the canton Nos. 120 and 130 are spun.

The general average of wages in the Zürich mills are,—

Men about 7*f.* 50*c.*; girls 4*f.* 50*c.*; children 3*f.*

The laws regulating child-labour in this canton (and which differ in each), restrict the admission of children to 10 years, under which age none are allowed to work in the cotton-mills. The clergy look very sharply after the enforcement

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of this law. I explained to Mr. Escher's foreman the province and powers of our factory inspectors; and he replied, "here we have clerical inspectors, instead of government officers, and sharp enough they are." The children may work 12 hours, which are the nominal working hours, though I believe there are few mills which do not average 13 actual hours of work. The children employed must, however, go to school at least half a day in the week.

Wages of Out-door Labourers.

My respected friend, Mr. Henry Escher, of Zürich, to whom I am indebted for much information and facilities in obtaining it, gave me the following rates of payment and dietary:—

In Zürich
- Common out-door day-labourers, summer - - 10 *batz.* = 1 *f.* 45 *c.*
- ditto - - - ditto - - winter - - 8 *batz.* = 1 *f.* 15 *c.*
- With a quart of wine and half a pound of bread per day.

In country
- Day-labourers, summer - - - - - 6½ *batz.* = 90 *c.*
- ditto - - winter - - - - - 5 *batz.* = 75 *c.*
- Same allowance of bread and wine.

Wages of Road-makers.

In the environs of the town, roadmakers gain 12 *batz.* = 1 *f.* 80 *c.*
In the country - - ditto - - - - 8 to 10 *batz.*

The sum of 400,000 *l.* having being expended in this canton alone on roads within the last four years, the number of road-makers is considerable.

Mental and moral condition of Weavers and others.

The weavers exhibit no distinctive difference from other classes, there being, in fact, properly speaking, no such class. The working classes (nearly all of whom weave) are, compared with those of England, greatly more moral, and beyond all comparison better educated. With regard to education, the law compels it, and consequently there are no persons to be found (barring idiots and accidental cases) who cannot read, and very few who cannot write. But the great body of the industrious classes of this canton are quite as well educated and informed as that class of men in France who come under the designation of the épicier class, given to them by a writer in the *London and Westminster Review*.

The education of the people in Zürich is perhaps the highest of any part of Switzerland; in the country they are less educated, but equally moral.

I am sorry to say, that the embezzlement of weft is not unknown to the manufacturers. The small handkerchiefs for women's necks manufactured by the owners of one or two looms, a sort of Scottish "small corks," are hawked about the country, and sold at exceedingly low prices. There is reason to believe that stolen weft, and even chains, not unfrequently find their way into these goods; but as the waste allowed is exceedingly great, amounting sometimes to not less than 20 per cent. throughout the various manipulations to which it is subjected, And there is reason to think that the legitimate savings of the skilful workwoman are frequently confounded with stolen weft.

Music is much cultivated in this canton, and the whole demeanor and appearance of the working classes present a most gratifying picture of high prosperity, contentment, morality and intelligence.

Progress of Manufactures in Zürich.

That very lucrative and prolific source of employment, cotton spinning, was at one period (1828) threatened by the opposition of the working classes, who (where one-fourth of the *whole* population vote), have the government of the canton entirely in their own hands. In 1830 the labouring classes opposed themselves with renewed vigour to the cotton-mills, and two years afterwards some outrages were committed. The power of education triumphed, however, over the narrow prejudices or first-sight impressions, which alone countenance doubts as to the benefit to the people of increased machinery. The people themselves recognised the truth of the great principles which demonstrate the inseparable identity of their own interests with the abundance of production: which alone constitutes the wealth of a nation, and necessarily regulates the labourer's share. The labouring classes (themselves the legislature) have since enacted laws confirming and promoting the march of machinery.

Few cantons are more flourishing than Zürich: the population (very slightly on the increase), consists of 220,000 inhabitants, and the entire poor-rates averaged a year or two ago, 2½ *d.* per head per annum on the whole population. In the parish

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parish in which I am writing this (Radnage, Bucks) the population is 399, and the rates exceed 300 *l.* per annum being 15*s.* per head per annum.

The silk manufactures are great sources of wealth to the people of this canton. They obtain the raw material chiefly from the Tyrol, Lombardy and Naples; the expense of carriage from Milan, one of the chief marts, is next to nothing, and the manufacturers of Zürich are enabled to obtain silk, both organsine, and weft, as cheap as those of Lyon.

The present number of looms is about 12,000, and each loom is calculated to produce at present, on the average, 750 florins per annum gross. I give this estimate as I received it, but I believe it an exaggerated one, because, taking the year through, one-half of the looms are idle, or nearly one-half of them. The increase, however, of this industry is indisputable: in 1834 there were not above 10,000 looms; and in 1806 there were not above 6,000; and in 1815 the number had not exceeded 7,500.

The number of individuals employed in the silk manufacture cannot be estimated at less than 14,000. Improvements are constantly making in the texture, body and designs of the fancy goods, and it is not improbable that a successful competition will be shortly established with the Lyonnese looms in other articles besides the light low-priced silks.

Cotton Manufacture.

Upwards of 40,000 cwt. of raw cotton is consumed in this canton, mostly spun into Nos. 30 to 50, though up to No. 130 are spun in small quantities. About one-seventh of the cotton tissus are printed. The total number of individuals engaged from first to last in the cotton manufactures is but little short of 20,000. A large importation of English yarns of the high numbers finds its way to this and the neighbouring canton of St. Gall.

St. Gall and Appenzel.

Fabrics.

These are the chief cantons for muslins and the finer ginghams; embroidery is also extensively carried on. I took great pains to ascertain the exact degree in which these several fabrics rival our own. During my official inquiries in Scotland, I was told of the formidable competition with the Glasgow muslins and ginghams anticipated there from the looms of this canton and the adjoining district; and a large house in the town of St. Gall was named to me as having offered excellent goods in the Glasgow market at as low or lower prices than they could be produced at there; I obtained an introduction to the house in question; it is one of the largest in Switzerland, both for woven goods and cotton twist; I furnished myself with numerous patterns of these muslins and ginghams from this and different establishments, and accurately ascertained the wholesale prices, verifying the statements made to me by asking the prices in *retail* shops: the result is as follows:—

In book-muslins, which require peculiar skill to make the warp and weft even, and still more skill in the finishing, I am of opinion that the Swiss manufacturers will be unable to compete successfully with ours, either in price or quality, for some time to come in all markets where the cost of carriage shall not be greater from Scotland than from St. Gall.

In jaconets, mulls and nainsooks, the Swiss are, as nearly as possible, on an equality with us.

The articles in which the Swiss, however, excel us, are in the description of figured muslins, called "japans," as well as in embroideries of every description, which are done with surpassing taste and exceeding beauty of execution. In neither of these descriptions of article are we likely to sustain successful competition with Switzerland in third markets.

In common lappets, which are produced in Scotland at the lowest rate of wages, we beat the Swiss, especially in the Bresilian markets.

In ginghams chiefly is Swiss competition to be dreaded by our manufacturers, and also in sprigged or coloured muslins; in both of these articles the superiority of Swiss dyes gives a preference to their goods over ours, whenever, as is the case with ginghams and coloured muslins, they can produce them as cheaply as ourselves. In order to give a somewhat more accurate view of the competition in prices, I subjoin a table of the prices of, as nearly as possible, similar articles at

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St. Gall and Glasgow. I have taken in each case the average wholesale prices, struck from the returns of different manufacturers in both places.

Articles.	No. of Chains, in 18½ Inches.	Width in Inches.	Nos of Yarn. *	How wefted.	Prices per Yard. St. Gall.	Prices per Yard. Glasgow.
					s. *d.*	*s.* *d.*
Gingham - - -	16⁰⁰	30	Ch. 70ˢ W. 80ˢ	3 shots over	– 7	– 7½
Ditto - - -	18⁰⁰	ditto	80ˢ 90ˢ	- equal -	– 7¾	– 8½
Imitation cambric -	20⁰⁰	35	100ˢ 115ˢ	1 shot over	1 –	– 11
Mull muslin - -	12⁰⁰	35	100ˢ 115ˢ	3 shots over	– 11	– 8½
Ditto (*a*) - -	15⁰⁰	35	160ˢ 180ˢ	- ditto -	1 –	– 11½
Figured muslin for window curtains -	18⁰⁰ 90 flower-lash.	46	130ˢ 145ˢ	- ditto -	1 8	1 10
Coloured lappets -	15⁰⁰	36	100ˢ 110ˢ	1 shot over	– 7½	3 9 for 10 yards.
Common muslin checks	14⁰⁰	35	100ˢ 110ˢ	2 shots under	– 5½	– 6½
Coloured striped muslin, Turkey red -	14⁰⁰	36	95ˢ 110ˢ	- ditto -	– 7	– 8½
Strong cotton stripes - (*b*) -	16⁰⁰	20	30ˢ 45ˢ	- ditto -	with red, 4 *d.* without, 3¼ *d.*	—
Pullicates, Turkey red	12⁰⁰	30 by 28	50ˢ 55ˢ * These are given only approximatively.	1 shot over	4 2 per dozen.	4 3 per dozen.

(*a*) These Articles are prepared and stiffened like book-muslins, the yarns from England.

(*b*) These (called "Printannières") were formerly purchased in the Scottish and English markets, but are now made in large quantities in St. Gall, for the Levant, America and Italy.

Mr. Gaspard de J. J. Weyermann told me that when in Scotland he convinced himself that he could manufacture more cheaply than the manufacturers there, and that he could now have large orders from thence; but that it was necessary always to complete them in so short a time, that he was not able to undertake them.

A Scotchman has been recently engaged by one of the first houses in St. Gall to superintend the finishing of book-muslins, and the clear finish will be introduced forthwith.

They appear to manufacture articles with great taste for the Italian markets; I saw some common pullicates, very dark colours, mostly 14⁰⁰, 34 inches square, to which an appearance resembling silk had been given by the hot cylinder; they were sold at 3 florins 20 kreutzers (5*s.* 7 *d.*), the dozen, and large sales were, I know, effected in them.

Essential cause of superiority of Swiss coloured Goods.

One of the causes why the Swiss ginghams, &c. look better and more vivid in colour than ours is, that the manufacturer supplies the best dressing himself to the weaver; in Scotland the weaver supplies it, and economises by mixing potatoes with it, and other rubbish.

Weaving System.

The system of manufacturing in these districts is somewhat peculiar. The merchant is not, as in Scotland, also the manufacturer; there is a middle man between him and the weaver, who sometimes receives the yarn from the merchant, and returns him the goods woven; this personage is called the *Fabricant*; he makes his own terms with the weaver, to which the merchant is not privy, and generally lives among them; as this man has his own profit to make, the wages paid for weaving are extremely low, and are, as nearly as possible, the same *in money* as those of Scotland. The average wages of adults, at 12 and 13 hours per day, do not exceed the rate of 5*s* to 6*s.* weekly, though on the finer work 7*s.* or 8*s.* may be made.

Wages.

As, however, few adults are exclusively employed thus in weaving, no comparison can be made between the condition of Swiss and Scotch weavers. In St. Gall, as in Zürich, there are scarcely any pure weavers, except the journeymen of whom I am about to speak, and they often assist in agricultural labour. The artisan peasantry of St. Gall live in the highest state of comfort; their frugality is

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is extreme; their wants are few in number, and of the most simple description; they enjoy the means of all the comforts they desire to possess. Almost every family possesses a piece of land.

Diet of the Artisan Peasants.

The breakfast of these artisan-agriculturists usually consists of milk and honey, and generally coffee; soup is the main dish at dinner, generally containing at least a pound of meat; potatoes in abundance, and not unfrequently porridge, of which the Swiss are very fond; their chief beverage is cider; wine is not often drank, except on high days and holidays; a meat meal is not customary every day, even among people in easy circumstances. The weaver, almost as soon as he can marry, makes every effort to purchase a small estate; and the system of mortgages generally facilitates its acquisition to any sober and industrious young man. Education is highly cultivated, and the morality, especially of the Protestant population, is remarkable.

Journeymen Weavers.

There are in these German cantons a class of itinerant weavers who have no settled abode, but become the tenants of any fabricant or householder who will give them board and work; they can subsist on as little as 4*d.* per day; but these men are the worst class, or rather the dregs of other classes, just as they are also in Scotland.

Prosperity and Beauty of Appenzel.

The canton of Appenzel presents the maximum of prosperity and contentment among the peasantry of Switzerland. I had a favourable opportunity of examining them whilst visiting my venerable friend Mr. Zellweguer, to whose eminent philanthropy the canton chiefly owes its superior welfare, and to whom Switzerland is indebted for many of those well appreciated principles of political economy and social government which have created the prosperity which signalizes her among the nations of Europe. Though I visited many of the cottages of the artisans of Appenzel with Mons. Zellweguer, I found no peculiarities to remark in them, beyond their generally higher degree of ease and peacefulness.

The cottages of both these cantons are scattered separately over the vales and hills, each standing in the midst of its little estate, with the goats or sheep with their melodious bells to their necks, grazing on the land, which is generally pasture. The interior of the cottages, which are built of wood, are cleanly beyond description, and are well furnished with every article of cottage comfort.

Appenzel is in fact the Arcadia of Switzerland, and I have never met a traveller who had visited that canton, who did not agree with me that it would be hopeless to expect any persons who had not witnessed the circumstances of its peasantry, and the aspect of their abodes, to appreciate from mere description the exceeding beauty, social and scenic, which it exhibits.

There are many points bearing on the general subject, on which information was educed by my inquiries and observations in this canton, but to which I shall more fitly recur in my concluding summary.

Cantons of Glaris and the Grisons.

Manufacturing industry is already well developed in the canton of Glaris, and its extension is commencing in the Grisons.

Hand-loom Weaving.

In Glaris not only are three cotton spinning-mills in the process of erection, but the weaving of the various sorts of cotton articles of St. Gall, and even for St. Gall merchants, is of considerable extent.

Wages.

The wages paid are somewhat lower than in the neighbourhood of St. Gall, and this is entirely left to the fabricant who weaves, or employs weavers as he pleases. If a weaver earns, after all deductions (and the carriage of webs is always taken into account), if he earns as much as 5 *s.* (*English*, for they have *schillings* in this canton of a very different value) per week, he must be in the first place a skilful workman; secondly, have worked at least 80 hours; and, thirdly, have had a superior class of web to weave.

Nevertheless so economical are the habits, so little costly the comforts, and so abundant the articles of consumption in this canton, that I do not hesitate to say that the Glaris weaver, even if confined to the income of his loom (which

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he seldom is), would be quite as well off on 5 *s.* in Glaris, as on 7 *s.* in Girvan, or 9 *s.* in Glasgow.

The Messrs. Trümpey are the chief manufacturing capitalists of this canton, and are large Turkey red dyers, as well as cotton-spinners.

Schools.

There are parish schools in every parish, and education is as extensively cultivated, though not carried so far, as in the other German cantons.

The prospective Industry of the Grisons.

The Grisons is a canton hitherto remarkable from the produce of its pastures, rather than of its looms; nevertheless manufacturing industry has taken root there; and, as far as cotton-spinning goes, I think it likely that in 20 years' time no canton will surpass it, if its natural advantages both in respect to abundance of iron and water and wood be made available. The soil produces under its present state of limited cultivation double the quantity of corn the inhabitants can consume, whilst its mountains feed nearly 100,000 head of cattle, besides a multitude of goats and sheep.

The manners of the peasantry are of the most simple and primitive description; they are almost wholly divested of any wishes beyond those of their present sphere, compassing as it does all the pleasures and comforts they can desire. To this may be attributed the neglect, otherwise unaccountably evinced, of the mineral riches of this fertile country.

At Coire there are some looms; but the weaving there is chiefly for domestic consumption, as indeed is the case almost throughout this canton.

With reference to wages, I can merely repeat my assertion, equally applicable to all the cantons of northern Switzerland, that they form no index whatever to the possessions of the receiver. In the Grisons they are, as far as mere money goes, extremely low, and if taken as a standard of condition, would indicate a degree of poverty beneath the Irish peasant, whilst the real condition of the Grison population is decidedly preferable to that of English farm-labourers.

Canton of Bale.

Fabrics.

The ribbon manufactures are flourishing, and a brisk competition is kept up with St. Etienne.

There are not less than 15,000 persons in this and the neighbouring cantons who work for Bale manufacturers, and to whom generally the looms belong, those weavers who work in the town of Bale, living themselves in the suburbs. The necessity of preserving the privacy of patterns renders it necessary to work in factories.

The other manufactures of Bale, such as hosiery, printing cottons, &c., have entirely declined.

Wages of the Hand-loom Factory Weavers.

The weavers, who work chiefly in factories, receive higher wages than those of St. Gall, &c., as I have before had occasion to remark is invariably the case where they work in factories.

Factory weavers, who are engaged generally by the piece, make about 6 *s.* 6 *d.* average net wages, but there are many who can greatly exceed this sum, and nowhere in Switzerland are the weavers better paid than at Bale.

The practice of engaging weavers by the day or week, is not unfrequent: they earn in this case easily 1 *s.* a-day, and often 8 *s.* a-week net wages.

In the country, and sometimes in the town, board is added to the payment of the weavers, which then averages in money not more than 3 *s.* in the country, and 4 *s.* in the town.

The morals of the weavers of Bale are remarkably good; they are an industrious, frugal, and highly moral class, providing almost universally for the education of their children.

Canton of Thurgovia.

This fertile canton contains a great number of looms; but it is impossible to give the number even approximately. The articles woven are chiefly muslins, ginghams, and coarser cottons; but there are likewise a large number of looms employed on the Bale fabrics. There is also a good deal of linen weaving and flax spinning.

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This canton is perhaps even more agricultural-artisan than St. Gall and Appenzel. Dr. Bowring states, that he found 11*d.* per day considered fair and comfortable wages; and there can be no doubt that whilst weaving, a weaver can earn this sum, and could live comfortably upon it. However, their earnings are so completely intermixed with the profits of other industry, that no money estimate can be other than approximative.

This canton presents no features of any singularity as to the moral condition of the weavers.

I have visited many other weaving districts; for instance, Lichtensteig, Rapperschwill, Bienne, Wyl, &c., but it is unnecessary to trouble you with further details on separate cantons; I shall therefore proceed to the summary of the results of my inquiry in Switzerland.

Summary of Report on Switzerland.

Wages.

From what I have already stated as to the wages of the weavers under the head of each canton, it will be apparent that, owing to the universal intermixture of agricultural industry with that of the loom, wages afford no criterion of the physical condition of those who weave.

The minute subdivision of land, and the peculiar facilities attending its acquisition, form another impediment in the estimate, and render the money-earnings of a family utterly useless, as a standard of the amount of clothing and sustenance they possess. From this very circumstance, however, it happens that the price paid for weaving is extremely low, and, as far as I could ascertain, on an exact par with the scale of payment in Scotland. This I attribute, in great measure, to the fact, that in Switzerland weaving is considered in its proper light, namely, as an occupation too easy and too light to be remunerated otherwise than by proportionately low payment; and low indeed would be the income of the Swiss artisan peasant, were this payment his sole means of sustenance. But there are other means whereby the careful observer may readily supply the absence of pecuniary criteria. The evidences of a well-furnished and roomy house, ample meals, excellent clothing, and superior education, are sufficient to testify the exceeding difference between the *means* and *money-earnings* of the Swiss artisan peasant: but still surer indices of high physical prosperity are legibly written on the rosy cheeks of each cottage child, and in the happy countenances and robust frames of the adult artisan.

I have elsewhere stated my belief, that it would require 30*s.* per week in England, in the neighbourhood of any county town, to put a man, his wife and three children (two of whom shall be above 15 years of age), in the same condition and in all physical respects on a footing with the average of Swiss artisan peasants having the same family. This statement requires a little explanation. I assume that an English family thus circumstanced, when provisions were of the average price in England, might be supposed to expend their 30*s.* somewhat thus:—

	£.	*s.*	*d.*
Rent of cottage of 4 rooms, per week	–	1	6
Bread, 26 lbs. weight	–	5	–
Bacon, 8 lbs. at 9*d.*	–	6	–
Coal, 2 cwt., or other fuel, year through	–	2	–
Potatoes, or other vegetables, 1 bush.	–	2	–
Beer, 14 quarts, 8*d.* per gallon	–	2	4
Tea or coffee, 2 oz., at 5*s.*	–	–	8
Sugar, 1 ½ lb., at 8*d.* per lb.	–	1	–
Butter, 1 ½ lb., at 1*s.* 2*d.* per lb.	–	1	9
Cheese, 1 lb.	–	–	9
Milk, 3 quarts	–	–	6
Soap, 1 lb.	–	–	7
Candles, 1 lb.	–	–	8
Tobacco, 1 oz.	–	–	3
Man's clothing (1 suit, 2 pair shoes and stockings, per year)	–	1	6
Woman's ditto (2 suits per year)	–	1	–
Three children (ditto each per year)	–	1	6
Club	–	–	6
Sundries	–	–	6
Total per Week	£.1	10	–

Of course the value of these articles will vary in different parts of England; but I believe the amount of comforts and necessaries to be purchased for 30*s.* a-week will, on the average, be found to tally with the above statement.

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I fearlessly assert that this amount of comforts and necessaries, *mutatis mutandis*, is enjoyed by the bulk of Swiss artisan families in the German cantons of Switzerland. This is an assertion which cannot be set aside by mere *ipse dixit*. They who may desire to do so, can alone ascertain its validity by personally visiting the homes of the Swiss peasants at different hours and in various cantons. I am not afraid to submit this statement to any one who has thus qualified himself to pronounce an opinion on the subject.

I am, moreover, impressed with a confident belief that the working classes of northern Switzerland enjoy a greater amount of physical comfort and of mental cultivation tnh athe working classes of any other European community.

Unmarried men and itinerant workmen are, for the most part, boarded in the houses of small proprietors.

The sums raised for the relief of the impotent poor are very trifling, and never, even where no institutions exist for their support, bear any comparison with poor-rates in England.

Price of Food.

The price of food necessarily varies greatly in different cantons, as the transit-tolls, which constitute a great part of Swiss taxation, make provisions comparatively dear, whenever they are not the produce of the canton in which they are consumed. The following will be found, however, a tolerably correct average for the majority of the German cantons :—

Bread fluctuates from 1*d.* to $1\frac{3}{4}d.$ per lb. of 17 ounces ; the average is three-halfpence for common bread, *i. e.* one batz of Zürich.

Meat varies from $2\frac{1}{2}d.$ to $4\frac{1}{2}d.$ per Swiss lb. ; average price, 3*d.*

Potatoes, 20*d.* per sack of 33 gallons ; but the fluctuations are very great.

Milk, from 5 to 7 farthings per pot of three pints.

Wine, for workmen, $\frac{3}{4}d.$ per quart, up to $1\frac{1}{2}d.$

Wood also varies much, from 20*s.* to 30*s.* per cord of 90 feet.

Meals.

The meals of the Swiss consist more of porridge than is general in England. and much more milk and cheese is consumed. In other respects (wine and cider being substituted for beer), the catalogue of articles I have given above will scarcely differ in the two countries. The amount of meat I have purposely stated rather low, because meat is not the food of the working classes, either of Switzerland or of any other country : it is the relish used with food. The Italian eats macaroni ; the staple food of the French and Germans is bread or cabbage ; of the Irish, potatoes (and the consumption of potatoes, as a main article of sustenance, is by no means confined to the United Kingdom, but is rapidly spreading over the continent). It is a beautiful fiction to describe John Bull as eating beef. If " John Bull " means two-thirds of the population, John Bull is living on vegetable diet ; and not above one-third of him is nourished by meat. The Indians eat rice ; the West Indians, yams and bread-tree ; the African, dates ; in fact, a fraction, and that a very small one, of mankind are carnivorous.

Wages were higher, as in England, during the war ; for persons knowing how to weave, were then smaller than they now are, in proportion to the demand for woven goods. The Peace returned a number of soldiers to the country, and weaving very soon resumed its rank among the lowest of arts.

The high education of the Swiss soon taught them to perceive that a handicraft, at least as far as plain weaving is concerned, requiring the skill of children and the strength of women, must necessarily be remunerated by the wages of children's and women's labour. Weaving, therefore, except in the fancy work, has long ceased to be a separate employment, and exists but as the occupation of children, women and elderly men, or as occupying the intervals of higher branches of adult industry.

A very important effect results to the economy of wealth from this system. It appears, that by this junction of manufacturing and agricultural industry by the same persons, that an augmentation must accrue to the production, and consequently to the wealth, of the country. An agriculturist in England seldom works after four o'clock in the afternoon ; the Swiss agriculturist, on the contrary, occupies himself at the loom, not only in the evening, but during bad weather, and in winter when the English farm-labourer is idle. The loom, which is here an exclusive and starving occupation, is there used as a pastime of supplementary production. It is, I think, manifest that the Swiss system increases the wealth

wealth of the nation; but it must be remarked, on the other hand, that were the sort of out-door labour performed by the Swiss artisans the same as that of English labourers on arable farms, instead of being chiefly horticultural and pastoral, as in Switzerland, it is questionable whether the hands inured to the plough, the flail and the pitchfork, would be fitted for the weaving of muslins and ginghams for evening amusement.

Moral and prudential Character.

The prosperity of the Swiss working classes is, however, mainly attributable, first, to perfect freedom of trade, which gives full scope to the productions for which the country and community have the greatest capacity; and, secondly, to the extremely slow increase of the population, which is well nigh stationary. But before proceeding to the other branches into which the subject of my inquiry divides itself, I will state a fact communicated to me by M. Zellweguer, as illustrating at once the prudence and prosperity of the Swiss peasantry.

Anecdote illustrating Swiss Prudence.

A few months ago, during a high wind, the most windward house in the village of Heiten (Appenzel) took fire; the houses were all of wood, and in a few hours the entire village was burnt to the ground. The loss of property was estimated at 400,000 *fl.*; and as the place was occupied almost entirely by the labouring classes, a liberal subscription was immediately raised for the relief of the sufferers. When the distributors of the charity tendered the proffered aid, to their great surprise they found but 140 individuals, not half the population, who required any relief, the rest having been received by their various relatives into their houses, an assistance which, added to the savings of the sufferers, enabled them to dispense wholly with the bounty of their neighbours.

The Swiss are constant in their attendance at places of public worship, and are, in all points regarding general morality, superior to any other community. The austere discipline of Calvin, and the rigorous religious training he imparted to the Swiss people, have incarnated the national character, and go far to account for the industry, as well as the moral rectitude, so eminently possessed by them.

Education.

Though each canton has somewhat different laws for enforcing education, I believe all, without exception, punish the ignorance of children as a crime on the part of the parents.

The usual mode of enforcing education is thus:—The gemeindamann (or local mayor) of the parish, finding children uneducated aged eight years, warns the parents twice to send them to school. This neglected, he informs the stadtholder (prefect), who orders the landyager (or local constable) to fine them heavily, and, if need be, to take the children to school. The fine is so heavy, and is so rigorously inflicted, that the offence seldom occurs.

I visited, among others, an excellent school in the canton of Appenzel. The system of teaching does not essentially differ from that followed in the canton of Zürich, which I shall presently specify; but, as a pattern of cleanliness and happiness to the children, that of Appenzel surpasses all I saw in Switzerland.

Boys and girls are not wholly separated, and they receive their lessons indiscriminately together. M. Zellweguer, who, I believe, founded this school, informed me, that though some doubts were at first entertained as to this system, it has answered admirably; the intellectual superiority of the boys acting favourably as a stimulus to the emulation of the girls, and the milder manners of the latter softening the roughness of the boys. A separate house is appropriated to each sex to live in, the girls, however, performing all the household service in both houses. I was told, that though of both sexes there are children of 14 years old, it is a rare occurrence that any attachments are formed there, or that young men marry young women both of whom were together at school. The feeling generated seems that of brother and sister, and so remains in maturer years.

In Zürich the following catalogue of instruction is found in the educational laws:—

"The subject of education in common schools shall consist of,—

"1.—*Elementary Instruction:* for pupils from six to nine years: 1. Language; 2. Calculation, mental, and on the slate; 3. Form preparatory to Geometry; 4. Elementary Singing.

 "2.—*Useful*

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"2.—*Useful Instruction:* for pupils from nine to twelve years: 1. Language; 2. Grammar; 3. Themes; 4. Arithmetic; 5. Geometry and Form; 6. Leading facts in History, Geography, &c., of Switzerland; 7. Outlines of Geography of Europe; 8. Outlines of General History; 9. Natural History and Geography.

"3.—*Cultivation of Taste:* 1. Reading, and learning Poetry by heart; 2. Singing; 3. Drawing and Caligraphy.

"4.—*Religious Instruction:* 1. Sacred History abridged."

Intermixture of Rich and Poor at Schools, and Friendliness in after-life.

I observed, that in most of the schools the children of rich and poor were indiscriminately mixed. Nevertheless, in no country can a more pleasing deference be observed on the part of the working classes towards those placed in more fortunate circumstances. This is most observable in the country districts, where a kindly feeling is reciprocal between employer and employed, which I have never witnessed elsewhere. A person to whom I was referred for information, on the borders of the lake of Zug, accompanied me to some of the houses of the artisan-peasants he told me he employed. In every house, without one exception, the man or his wife, whichever happened to receive us, held out their hands, first to him, and then to me, and again shook hands on parting. Their manner was quite in accordance with this; and the shaking hands was evidently not a mere form, but the prompting of real feeling. My conductor proved to be the employer of a thousand silk-looms! I could not help contrasting this with the state of feeling between persons in a similar relation in Scotland or Lancashire.

Botanical Garden.

In Zürich a botanical garden has recently been planted, containing many valuable plants, on ground which originally formed some of the outworks of the fortifications of the town. I found it, to my surprise, not only open to the public, but not even surrounded by any fence or railing. Nevertheless, the plants were wholly uninjured, and were left there in perfect confidence that the public would respect them. The railings were in preparation; but when they are erected, the garden will be left open. I am afraid that a botanical collection, equally exposed in England, would scarcely meet with the same respect, or that the botanists of England would be hazardous enough to entrust equally valuable plants without fence or guardian.

Appenzel workhouse.

I visited an Appenzel workhouse, into which impotent people, and troublesome persons of infirm mind, are admitted. The same cleanliness which pervades the schools appeared to be enforced. The food was, however, inferior to that given generally in the new union workhouses here. They have porridge for breakfast, vegetable soup for dinner, and vegetable soup or bread and milk for supper. Those who are very old or ill, have coffee. There is no regular meat meal.

A great dislike to go to the poor-house prevails; but out-door aid is not unfrequently given in cases of great poverty, or accidental distress.

The workhouse system of Switzerland seems, as far as I had an opportunity of judging, based on the principle of the 43d of Elizabeth. "The flax and hemp to set the poor on work" were in full use; and among the whole number of paupers, I saw not one who was without occupation.

Itinerant Journeymen.

Most of the trades in Switzerland are supplied with itinerant workmen; but I defer to my account of Austria the information I have to give of this system, one which extends throughout Germany.

I have merely to remark here, that the condition of this class is by no means better than that of the hand-loom weavers.

Non-Combination, and its Effects.

I have one general remark to offer as to the comparative condition of British and continental working classes.

Wherever combinations for raising the rate of wages exist in England or Scotland, the wages of that trade are far higher than on the continent. Wherever no such combination exists in a trade in England as hand-loom weaving, there the workmen of the continent have the advantage. I believe this remark will be found to apply almost invariably.

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I have before alluded to the progress Switzerland is making in other manufactures than those of tissues or woven goods.

In cotton spinning especially I am inclined to believe that she is likely to augment her wealth. I have already stated that there were 608,682 spindles going in 1836; since which time, 30,000 or 40,000 have been added. Several new mills are now erecting in the canton of St. Gall, and in other parts of the country. These mills are not remarkable for their size; the largest being those of the Messrs. Kuntz at Windisch, and the Messrs. Bebié at Turgi, in Argovia, each driving 35,000 spindles.

Progress of general Manufactures.

Mr. Gaspard Escher, of Zürich, is a machine-maker, as well as a spinner, and employs no less than seven Englishmen in his engine-works: he has about 650 workmen, and uses five tons of iron daily: he makes almost every description of machinery; steam-boats and self-acting mules both emanate from his ateliers; and though I do not think Messrs. Sharp & Roberts are in any danger of competition from the Zürich machinists *in the Lancashire factories*, I am by no means so sure that our cotton-spinners there who have hitherto supplied Switzerland with all her fine yarns, have the same cause for indifference.

M. Wegermann, of St. Gall, told me that they had little doubt of soon exporting cotton twist, and that they had already made the experiment at Leipsig with great success, realising a fair profit. Mills are now erecting which will spin No. 160^{s}. The Messrs. Escher are enabled *to combine the distinct advantages of the patents for self-acting mules* of Mr. Smith and of Messrs. Sharp & Roberts, which, of course, cannot be done in England. The fact is, and the same observation holds good wherever iron-manufactures are flourishing abroad, that foreign engineers borrow our inventions, cull and combine the advantages of our various patents (which we cannot do ourselves), and bribe our workmen to make them. The only great disadvantage they possess in Switzerland is higher-priced iron; as to fuel, they enjoy an exemption from it altogether, from the abundance of water-power. Whatever disadvantages remain to be deducted on the score of carriage of the raw material, &c., are balanced by the rate of money-wages in factories being about one-half the average in Lancashire. Machine making is advancing rapidly in perfection, and the aptitude of the work-people is advancing also; but when these elements in the race are matured, I do not believe that, after the carriage is added, our yarn will find any sale in Switzerland, or immediately adjacent countries. The prices of mule-twist in Switzerland average for No. 40^{s}, best quality, 15 *d.*; second best, 14 *d.*; for No. 60^{s}, first quality, 20 *d.*; second quality, 17 *d.*; for No. 80^{s}, best, 2 *s.* 3 *d.*; second quality, 2 *s.*

Turkey Red Dye.

I endeavoured to penetrate the mystery which appears to shroud the cause of our inferiority, in spite of all our efforts, in the production of Turkey red dye; the result was a conviction that there is no secret at all. It appears that we buy the drugs, the madder, the aligari, the gall, &c., generally in the same markets with the Swiss; that we procure Swiss dyers, Mr. Bam Gardner, and sundry others, to instruct us and superintend the operation; but nevertheless we are beaten, and our colours will not "stand" like theirs, neither is the hue so brilliant; it strikes me that both air and water are against us, and that the mystery is much the same as that which renders ale brewed at Burton very different to the ale brewed at Edinburgh, and which would still be different were the self-same ingredients used at each place. I shall have further occasion to establish this hypothesis hereafter.

Causes of the Prosperity of Switzerland.

As the hand-loom weavers in nowise differ in their condition from that of the rest of the community of which they form so large a portion in the northern cantons, to account for the prosperity of the country is to account for theirs.

It appears to me that Switzerland presents the only perfect example of the practical effects of free trade in the world; one which we cannot too deeply study. I attach great weight to the frugal habits and to the moral restraint of the Swiss people as causes of their signal welfare. I attribute their diligence and skill to their virtue and to their intelligence. I attribute the benefit of their almost stationary population to the force of reason and foresight which induce it, and of neither of these several elements of popular welfare do I deny the power. But when I look to the small quantity of grain Switzerland produces, one-third only of the proportion of grain to population in Great Britain; when I see her untoward position for the carriage of her imports and exports, I am compelled to look

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further for the sources of *eminent prosperity*, where all physical circumstances seem calculated to produce *peculiar poverty*. Her soil even refuses to furnish (with trivial exceptions), the material of any one of the productions in which she chiefly excels, and yet, hemmed in as she is by a cordon of foreign custom-houses, her productions find their way into the remotest markets of the world.

I assign two causes for this state of things; first, nearly all the consumers in Switzerland are producers; they have no funded debt; that is to say, there are no body of persons whom those who labour have to keep, and far fewer retail shopkeepers, the amount consumed by all of whom, being non-producers, is as a dead burthen on the industry of the rest; secondly, and this is the most effective cause, I attribute the prosperity of Switzerland to her entire freedom of trade; she exchanges what she can best produce and spare with whatever country has the most of what she wants.

Not a single country in return admits her goods free of duty; not one among the commercial people of the globe reciprocate her absence of customs; but what is that to her? does it prevent her obtaining from whom she will the commodities she desires, and enjoying those commodities when she has them at the cost price, instead of augmenting them to her domestic consumers by a duty? and if foreign countries who must be repaid in Swiss goods choose to refuse to give themselves and their consumers a similar benefit, or if they choose by heavy duties to put difficulties in the way of their own merchants being paid, what, I repeat, is that to Switzerland?

As for protecting duties, the Swiss people believe that if a trade cannot support itself without a protecting duty, that that is sufficient proof that the trade is not suited to the capacities of the country, because the articles in question can be produced for less money elsewhere. This is taken as sufficient evidence that it is injurious to the country to continue, or to protect, any such trade; first, because consumers in Switzerland must lose the difference between the low price of the foreign article and the higher price of the home article; and, secondly, because the trade in articles which Switzerland *can* produce is injured to a greater extent in the foreign market, than the protected trade is benefited in the home market. The produce which is capable of being sold in other countries is the most profitable to the producing country; and so far from protecting others which cannot be exported, it is the interest of a community to discontinue them. The fact that a trade wants protection, is an amply sufficient reason why it should not be protected. These principles are fully appreciated and acted on by Switzerland, a country beset with disadvantages, and yet eminently prosperous. This is a problem which the opponents of free trade are bound to solve.

Switzerland is deficient in statistics, and it is owing to the absence of custom-houses that it is not possible to ascertain her exports and imports, except so vaguely that I decline making any statement on the subject.

In woven goods, all countries hitherto exporting, have experienced a stagnation; many, like England, a decided decline. There is reason to think Switzerland has not increased her exports of cotton goods since the American crisis, but it is believed that one or two fresh markets will be shortly opened to her; at any rate, she has suffered no depression.

Transit Dues.

My attention having been called to the transit dues imposed by foreign nations on goods passed through their dominions, I took several opportunities of inquiring into their character, especially of M. Tscharner, the Avoyer of Berne, M. Zellweguer, &c.; I find that, so far from there being the slightest chance of foreign countries raising the price of transit dues, they constantly compete with each other to secure the advantage to themselves, by rendering the dues as small, instead of as high, as possible. Seeing that Switzerland can send her goods through any country she chooses, of course the effect of one of them raising these dues would be to throw the benefit exclusively, or nearly so, into the hands of others. The Duchy of Baden has expended large sums on its roads purposely to facilitate and encourage the transit of Swiss goods through Baden, and prevent, as much as possible, transit through France or Wurtemberg. Any apprehension on this score exists merely among the opponents of free trade in England; the Swiss do not entertain it. The Swiss system of commerce and industry may be thus

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thus summed up: first, as it affects production; and, secondly, as it affects distribution.

1. Free trade and industry augment the amount of commodities produced on the one hand, whilst prudence, limiting population, restricts unproductive consumption on the other, by increasing the proportion of adult producers to children incapable of producing their own subsistence.

2. The total absence of debt, sinecures and entails, minimise the number of non-producers, and leave proportionally larger shares for the productive classes.

In other words, free trade and industry increase commodities, that is, capital, that is, means for employing labour; whilst the limited population diminishes the number of labourers to be employed: thus wages rise.

It has been stated that Switzerland has little capital: she has more in proportion to her population than any people in Europe; but it is far more equally divided among her community, and therefore less perceptible. Those who labour, are in great measure capitalists themselves: profits of capital are often identical with wages.

I have only to add, that as there is less pressure for food, no combinations (with rare exceptions) exist among continental labourers, a pressure which, in this country, induces those who can combine to raise their wages to the impoverishment of those who cannot.

Switzerland enjoys the two great national blessings, FREEDOM of TRADE and FREEDOM of LABOUR, and these are the roots of her prosperity.

AUSTRIA.

Austria.

MY inquiries were limited in Austria; I had not time to extend them as I wished. I am indebted for my information as to western Austria chiefly to the kind and intelligent assistance of Mr. Peter Kennedy, a gentleman who (originally from Manchester) has established himself in partnership with Mr. G. Escher, of whom I had occasion to speak in my Report on Switzerland. The Messrs. Escher & Kennedy have a large cotton spinning mill at Feldkirch, in the Vorarlberg, where I had the pleasure of seeing Mr. Kennedy.

Hand-loom Weavers.

The hand-loom weavers, who are numerous in this part of Austria, are far from being ill off, uniting weaving almost universally with other work.

The fabrics woven are nearly all sorts of cotton goods, but chiefly of the coarser descriptions.

Wages vary from 7 *d.* to 18 *d.* per day. A girl will easily earn 36 *kreutzers* (1 *s.*) per day; and food being remarkably cheap, a weaver can live on 18 *kreutzers* (6 *d.*) per day, with great comfort, and a woman on 15 or 16 *kreutzers*.

The cottages and homes of the weavers indicate no poverty, though they are by no means either so clean or so comfortable as those of Switzerland; nevertheless few are without a garden; and most of the weavers quit the loom not unfrequently for out-door or other employment.

Evidence of Mr. Kennedy of Feldkirch.

Mr. Kennedy, in a letter which I have recently received from him, states—"There are 4,000 looms in this province, a number which has been ascertained officially; but what with the interruptions occasioned by cultivating the land, going to markets, &c. &c., I conceive they do not deliver more than 3,000 pieces a week; and as they have abundance of occupation, they must be exceedingly well treated, or they leave their work. This, however, is the state of things which existed 25 or 30 years ago in Scotland and England, before the weaving by power became prevalent; and as the power-looms are already established here, and establishing to the extent of 600 to 1,000, and likely to increase, I doubt not it will be felt in its influence on the hand-loom weavers, as it has been elsewhere. The state of the hand weaving here you know; the weavers can gain easily 1 *s.* a day, which is high wages for a girl of 16 to 24, as they can live at home for 12 *kreutzers* or 14 *kreutzers*. In Bohemia and Saxony the weavers work at a considerably lower rate, but there they have not the resources I have mentioned as opened to the weavers here."

No great reduction has taken place in weavers' wages of late years.

Wages of other Classes.

The wages of other classes are not materially higher than those of the weavers.

Travelling Journeymen.

The system of the "*wanderschaft*," or that of travelling journeymen, prevails, as I have before said, throughout Germany and Austria; all the workmen of these countries may be said to belong to this order; for, by immemorial usage, no apprentice can obtain his freedom and become a master until he has spent so many years under his itinerant probation, and in following his avocation in other than his native country. He is furnished, on setting out, with a book (*wanderbuch*), in which his various masters insert cerificates of his services and conduct.

These journeymen are not only assisted by their own fraternity in each town they pass through, but are entitled to beg alms of travellers, a privilege they are by no means backward in availing themselves of. I have been often begged of by them, and have found them in conversation generally well informed, and speaking two, if not three, languages. I am inclined to think that a great benefit results from this system, inasmuch as labour is far better apportioned to the demand; for these men often travel through several towns, till they find employment, and no accumulations of labour take place, sinking wages below the general average. The native workmen of countries such as Switzerland probably lose more than they gain by it, though the advantages of travel are equally necessary to themselves. I object however, decidedly, to the practice of begging, which cannot but remove the reluctance to so degrading a resource in after life, when distress may arise, without the palliation which custom affords to the journeyman. In every other respect it appears advantageous; and in point of intelligence I can speak from personal knowledge to the fact, that these journeymen on the continent very far surpass the same class in this country in general education.

Mr. Kennedy favoured me with some written remarks on this interesting subject, which, from his long residence in Austria, no one more fully understands:—

"You are aware that here, as over almost every part of Germany, the trades of tailors, shoemakers, furriers, &c. &c., are carried on by masters who employ journeymen on the 'wanderschaft,' as it is called; that is to say, workmen who go from town to town, stay a winter at one place, a summer at another, and receive generally, besides board and lodging, a certain sum weekly; this is usually about a dollar (3*s.*), to 3*fl.* (5*s.*), (tailors 20 per cent. less); when they go from one town to another, it is a recognized privilege of theirs, from time immemorial, to ask assistance from passers-by as they travel along, and at the towns they pass through, and at every town there is an 'herberge,' as they call it, where the master of the inn has agreed with the guild of that trade to lodge them at a very low rate; so that when they arrive, they immediately ask for the tailors' or shoemakers', &c. 'herberge,' and by that means can travel very cheaply,—a very bad system, which was originally intended to give them an opportunity of improving themselves in the knowledge of their art, but it is peculiarly favourable to vagabondising. At the moment I am writing this, a silk-weaver has applied to me for assistance: from his passport I see he has been in Italy, and then in Hungary, and is returning to the grand duchy of Nassau, whence he came." Of course in the large towns they have the system of piece-work in a much greater degree. A carpenter here can earn from 48 *kr.* to 54 *kr.* and even a florin (1*s.* 8*d.*) per day; millwrights, ditto. The social system is very different in Austria to what it is in England or in Scotland: in the first place, almost every father of a family has a house and several patches of land. The house and land may have cost 1,200*fl.* to 1,500*fl.* or even less, (1,200*fl.* equals 100*l.* sterling), and this the proprietor has probably bought liable to a mortgage of 600*fl.*, 800*fl.* or even 900*fl.*, for which he pays 5 per cent. This little province, containing about 90,000 inhabitants, sends out masons and house-builders to nearly the whole of Switzerland, and the neighbouring provinces of France. They leave early in spring, live very sparingly during the summer, cooking for themselves a kind of pudding or soup of flour and Indian corn, which, with bread, and now and then a glass of wine, suffice for their nourishment. They return home in autumn, where they have little to do during winter, excepting

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excepting to fell wood, &c. in the forests, and other chance work. The children leave the country at the same time, in thousands, to herd cattle in Suabia and Bavaria; they get, perhaps, 1 *l.*, besides board and lodging, for their services, a suit of home-spun linen clothes, and two pair of shoes, and perhaps a bag of flour, which they manage to cook for themselves on the way, and return with nearly the whole of their earnings. The women who remain, and the elder men, cultivate the land, and the girls and many of the young men weave, and are employed in the manufactures.

Food.

I have before stated that food is cheap in Austria. I quote the price of bread and meat as published by authority in the "*Feldkircher Wochenblatt*" of October 9th, the day I was at that town: best wheat 6 *fl.* the half "metz," of which four make a sack; (the price of the English quarter would be therefore 40 *s.*); common wheat, $2\frac{1}{2}$ *fl.* per half "metz" (or 33 *s.* 4 *d.* per quarter.)

Best white bread, $1\frac{2}{5}$ *d.* per English lb.	Veal, 3 *d.* per English lb.
Common ditto - $1\frac{1}{6}$ *d.* - - ditto.	Mutton, $2\frac{3}{4}$ *d.* - ditto.
Beef - - - - 3 *d.* - - ditto.	Pork, 4 *d.* - - ditto.

The working classes and weavers eat but very little meat; their meals consist chiefly of roasted potatoes, cheese, coffee and American corn.

Cotton Spinning.

There are now 600,000 spindles in Austria, including Bohemia, Lombardy and the Vorarlberg only; there were only 400,000 in 1828.

Cotton spinning is greatly encouraged by the Austrian government, who have afforded this manufacture a protecting duty on our cotton twist of 15 *fl.* on 123 lbs. English weight, about 3 *d.* a lb.; this duty, added to the carriage, would prevent any English twist from entering Austria, were it not that the Austrian manufacturers chose to keep up their prices, and to realise a profit of at least 12 per cent.; with less than which they would not be content; thus the protecting duty protects them in fleecing the consumers: accordingly the weaving manufacturers make loud outcry and lamentation; but the spinners are at present too strong for them, and the protecting duty is maintained. In the course of a very interesting and instructive conversation with Mr. Kennedy, who is one of the most intelligent men I met with abroad, I asked him what he thought of a repeal of the corn-laws in England? His answer was, "As a foreign manufacturer, I should be exceedingly sorry to hear of any thing of the sort." He added afterwards, that were any circumstances to reduce the price of English goods, the Austrian spinners would most probably give up their manufactories; that if no higher protecting duties could be obtained, the rate of their profits must sink; and that if they sank only by two or three per cent., they would prefer other investment of their capital, as they would not be content with the same rate of interest as in England.

High Profits of Austrian Spinners.

Mr. Kennedy informed me of a fact which I quote, to prove the injury British manufacturers are liable to from the corn-laws, and the consequent low rate of English profits. Mr. Kennedy told me that he was about to try the experiment (of which he confidently expected success) of underselling a certain Lancashire spinner, in a market he now supplied with nearly his own produce, and driving him permanently out of it; this he intended to effect merely by reducing his own profits, to, say, three or four per cent.; this, of course would reduce the other to the necessity of selling at no profit at all, or in fact at a dead loss. Mr. Kennedy moreover asserted most confidently, that the Austrian and Swiss spinners could drive us wholly out of their markets whenever they thought fit to reduce their profits to a level with ours; and this is the fact.

Factory Wages and Hours.

The wages of the factory labourers average as follows: spinners, 1 *fl.*, (1 *s.* 8 *d.*) per day; women, from 30 *kr.* to 40 *kr.* (10 *d.* to 1 *s.* $1\frac{1}{3}$ *d.*) per day; children 13 *kr.* to 16 *kr.* ($4\frac{1}{3}$ *d.* to $5\frac{1}{3}$ *d.*) per day.

The hours of factory labour in Austria are cruelly long, being frequently in the factories of the interior 15 hours per day, exclusive of meal-time; and not unfrequently 17 hours. No law protects the children. At Messrs. Escher & Kennedy's mills, a humaner system is adopted; and the time of work seldom exceeds from 13 to 14 hours.

It appears that the fate of these unhappy children has excited some animadversion in Austria, and that the question of shortening the time of work is occupying the attention of the government; for an association of the cotton-

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spinners has been formed, to which the owners of 470,000 out of the whole 600,000 spindles in the empire already belong. The efforts of this association are employed in using every possible means to keep the law as it is, and to maintain this flagrant inhumanity. This subject has been frequently recalled to my notice in other countries. Any remark which I might chance to make on the bad effects of not limiting the hours of infant labour in other factories, has been generally met by the remark, "We do not work our children nearly so much as in Austria." Thus the cruelty of the Austrian practice becomes a justification (though a bad one) for lesser cruelty over the rest of the continent.

Education.

Education is beginning to be better attended to than formerly in Austria.

The law is more attentive to the minds than the muscles of the little factory children, and decrees that no proprietor of a factory shall emyloy any child who has not been, and does not produce a certificate of having been, so many sessions at school.

General character of Austrian Weavers and Artisans.

Little distinction can be made between hand-loom weavers and other artisans in Austria. Weaving is much combined with agricultural pursuits. The working classes generally are a contented, but certainly an ill-informed people; they are moreover weaker in intellect than perhaps any of the surrounding countries; and as the progress of mind is under the immediate tutelage of the catholic priesthood, there is no reason to expect any material advance in Austrian intelligence.

The Tyrol.

The means of life seem generally very equally distributed according to the manufacturing demand for labour, or the fertility of the soil, compared with the number of the population. In the Tyrol great poverty prevails, and this forces the natives to migrate and wander over the rest of the continent, deriving a scanty subsistence from the sale of wares, &c., but almost invariably returning to enjoy their scanty savings, and die in their beloved father-land.

The Tyroleans form an exception to the Austrian character; they are bold, generous, hardy, enterprising, and religious beyond the mere formalities of superstitious observances. The generality of the Austrians are, however, of a mild and amiable character. As a people, they are almost universally liked.

Progress of Manufactures.

Weaving and spinning are both on the increase in Austria. The internal manufactures continually approximate nearer to a total supply of the internal demand, and in the coarser calicoes some exports are taking place.

In woven goods, the Vorarlberg hand-loom weavers are subjected to the competition of those of Bohemia, where wages are much lower, and where the condition of the weaver must be fully as bad as those of Scotland and Lancashire.

In the production of yarn, the same disadvantages attend this industry which I alluded to in Switzerland, namely, dearness of iron, and distance from cotton marts; but nevertheless there is evident scope for larger produce; and the increase which has taken place in this manufacture already is sufficient evidence of its capabilities and success. The cost of erecting machinery, (except to Mr. Escher, who makes it himself) is the greatest drawback. A cotton-mill of 24,000 spindles, I was informed, would cost 37,000 *l.* to erect. This would be at the rate of 30 *s.* 10 *d.* per spindle, whereas, at the ordinary estimate in England of 17 *s.* 6 *d.* per spindle, such a mill would cost us only 21,000 *l.* Cotton-wool is brought from Trieste, the whole way on the axle. However, the long hours, the low wages, the water-power costing nothing, and the protecting duty, fully compensate for the cost of erection. And this important branch of industry may be considered to be in a very thriving state.

The extent of the Escher-Kennedy Establishments.

The Messrs, Kennedy and Escher are erecting fresh mills in Piedmont and Sardinia, and a paper-making establishment at Roveredo, besider those in Switzerland; the extent of their enterprises is considerable, and their mills (they have also a power-loom factory nine miles from Feldkirch), on the Austrian side of the Rhine combine the markets of Austria and Switzerland, an advantage which, owing to the Austrian customs, those in Switzerland do not enjoy. This firm are also about to engage in the new establishments for flax-spinning in Wirtemburg.

Protective Law.

The Austrian government most rigorously enforces the protecting duty: they make all the Austrian spinners keep a book for the entry of all the yarns spun, and the weavers of all the yarn they buy. This they compare with the imports, and are often enabled to trace the purchase of smuggled yarn to the culprit.

I do

I do not believe the progress of power-looms will reduce Austrian wages; if it narrows employment to hand-looms, it must increase it to other trades. The capital of a country is increased by extending its machinery, and wages rise in proportion to the increase of capital, or (what necessarily results from increased capital) increased demand for labour. The hand-loom weavers of England and Scotland would have easily improved their condition but population increased with us as it has increased no where else in Europe, and balanced the additional demand for labour arising from the capital created by machinery, that capital being moreover itself tethered by the protection of the landed interest. Effect of Power-looms on Wages in Austria.

There is a good deal of dyeing done in Austria. The most beautiful of the dyes in which the continent excels us are those of *Trieste*. I beg to call your attention to the fact, that though of course the exact same materials are used and the same process followed in other parts of Austria, yet the colour of the Trieste dye is so much and so notoriously finer than others, that it fetches a higher price in the market. This is, of course, owing to some peculiarity in the Trieste air or water, or probably both. Another proof that it is no undiscovered secret that accounts for foreign superiority in these dyes, is the fact that the dye even abroad is never so good in winter as in summer. Turkey Red Dye.

I cannot too earnestly direct your attention to the great progress making abroad in the perfection of machinery. English engineers and artisans are now to be found almost as a matter of course in each of the large establishments which abound in the manufacturing districts of the continent. I met with a new invention of a Mr. Bodmer's at Feldkirch, which I had previously seen in some of the Swiss mills, whereby labour is saved in the carding and drawing operations, by means of substituting a large cylinder at the end of each row of carding machines to wind the cards on, instead of the pans used in England, which are thus wholly dispensed with. Foreign Machinery.

English inventions, and all our new patents are pirated by most of the large establishments on the continent. I met a gentleman largely connected with the spinning trade in Lancashire, who told me he had been present somewhere in Italy, where he saw some machinery being put up which had been cast on the model of a patent of the Messrs. Crichton, with even the very words "Crichton, Patent" on it. In fact they get over our machinery on purpose to mould theirs by.

The smuggling commission is 75 per cent. paid on delivery; but it is clear that, with English workmen and engineers to aid them, they will not much longer need any other help from us.

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Hand-loom Weaving.

Hand-looms are scattered over nearly the whole of the departments of the Haut and Bas Rhin, the articles woven are chiefly muslins and fine calicoes. The power-looms are not one-twenty-fifth of the whole number of looms in France; nevertheless the weaver's condition in France is worse than in any of the other countries I have visited.

Wages of Weavers.

It is unnecessary to detail the wages of the hand-loom weavers, which vary for the most skilled class from 6*f.* to 9*f.* per week, and for the second rate class, from 4*f.* 50*c.* to 6*f.*; and for women and children, forming the third, or lowest class, from 2*f.* to 4*f.* 50*c.* These are net wages, the manufacturers either beaming the warps and furnishing the looms in factories, or paying equivalently. Something more, however, is generally earned in the factories, for the weavers prefer usually working at their own homes. The average net wage, of an adult Alsace weaver will not exceed 5*f.*, that is, a piece of calico of 70 porters (French), 28 shots in a quarter of an inch, is paid about 5*f.* the cut of 25 French ells (of 44 inches); a good weaver will perhaps weave five ells per day, including lost time, or 6*f.* gross wages.

It is generally considered in Alsace that wages for weaving are higher there than in Switzerland: if so, the difference is so minute, that I was unable to discover it.

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The following are the prices of some of the chief muslin manufactures of Mulhouse :—

1. Jaconet 15°°, 35 inches wide, chains No. 100^s, weft 130^s, 30 shots in the quarter of an inch ; sale price 1 *s.* per ell of 44 inches ; wages for weaving 5 sols ($2\frac{1}{2}d.$) per ell.
2. A striped muslin 15°°, 35 inches wide, 2 shots over for printing, was 1*f.* 50*c.* per ell (or 1*s.* 3*d.*) ; of this considerable quantities were made ; the weavers gaining between 6*f.* and 8*f.* per week on them.
3. Fine calico 14°°, 35 inches, 2 shots over, warp much thicker than weft ; very evenly woven cloth, 12 sols (6 *d.*) per ell of 44 inches. Calicoes range from this price to 10*d.* per ell, and some as high as 1*f.* 40*c.*, according to width.

Our manufacturers have not much to dread from Alsatian competition, excepting inasmuch as the protecting duties (which are the main cause of the backwardness of Mulhousen manufactures), prevent our articles from entering the French market.

Factory Hand-looms.

As I have already stated, a large portion of the weaving of Alsace is carried on in factories, where every thing, from the loom to the weft, is supplied by the master. The following notes on the expenses of these establishments may be of interest :—

A building to contain 100 hand-looms will cost 14,000*f.*, and the looms and their appurtenances nearly 5,000*f.*, or 2*l.* per loom ; they are of a rough, coarse description, and very ill-mounted in every respect.

The produce of each loom per annum will be about 30 or 32 pieces of yard-wide calico per loom, but 40 to 45 per weaver, the difference being accounted for by the time lost in beaming, &c., on each loom.

The wages paid average 5*f.* per cut, which will be woven by a good weaver in five days. Those in factories make generally 6*f.*, or at least 5*f.* 50*c.* per week.

The expenses of upholding the building looms, fuel, winding, superintendence, &c. &c., average from 100*f.* to 120*f.* per loom per annum, or about 2*f.* (1*s.* 8*d.*) per week.

Physical Condition of the Weavers.

The homes of the weaving classes are for the most part dirty, comfortless, and evincing every symptom of bad management and poverty combined. Even those who have children in the cotton-mills do not keep up any appearance of comfort. I am aware, that passing immediately from Switzerland, where the cottages are pictures of neatness and comfort, I was apt to be too unfavourably impressed of the very inferior condition of the Alsatian artisans. I shall, however, corroborate my own view of the matter by a quotation from the opinion of one eminently qualified to form a judgment of the mental as well as bodily condition of those around him. In the meantime, I may remark, that I believe that the Alsatian weavers are, generally speaking, not without a sufficiency of food, though in all other respects they are certainly ill off. In the mountains of the Vosges the peasantry are worse worse off still ; and there looms are also found, but chiefly on the system of the "customer" weavers of Scotland, though not exclusively, for there are some who weave for manufacturers, at very low wages.

Summary of Mental and Moral Condition of the Artisans of Alsace.

On this subject, Mr. Nicholas Schlumberguer, of Guebwiller, an eminent manufacturer, thus writes to me,—

"On the question which is engaging your attention, it may be said, that, upon the whole, the working class can live much more cheaply in France than in England, and consequently the rate of wages is lower in our country than in yours. It may also be said, that the working classes are less given to the vice of drunkenness in France than in England ; but they are not more moral for that : their want of prudence is excessive ; they live from hand to mouth (au jour le jour) ; the least illness, or want of work at all prolonged, plunges them into a state of profound misery. They feed themselves irregularly ; their homes are dirty, which contributes to render their physical state worse than that of the English workmen."

Alsatian Spinning Factories.

There are several very large spinning-mills at Mullhouse, and in other parts of Alsace. They are, however, by no means in a flourishing condition, owing to various

various causes: among others, the high protecting duty which the tariff of France imposes on the importation of foreign iron, in order, as I was told in Normandy, to protect the monopoly of about fifty proprietors of indigenous iron-mines, next in consequence of the Alsatian manufacturers being obliged to draw all their cotton (at a cost of 3*sols*. per lb.) through Havre or Marseilles, it being prohibited to them to have it from Hamburg, Trieste, or any foreign port, however much more convenient to them. Coals also cost them exceedingly high (4*f*. 70*c*. per 100 kilogrammes, *i. e.* 3*s*. 11*d*. per 220 lbs.).

The erection of a mill, machinery, &c., included, costs about 30*f*. (24*s*. 2*d*.) per spindle; and they calculate that a thirty horse steam-engine, requisite for 18,000 or 20,000 spindles, consumes 2,250 kilogrammes per day of 13 hours' work, and costs about 45,000*f*.

Previous to the modification of the prohibition on the import of foreign twist, the Mulhouse mills spun yarns up to No. 250^{s}; but since our twist is admitted as low as 170^{s} on the payment of a slight duty, they have ceased to spin any high numbers, a result for which the manufacturers give almost any reason but the true one, namely, the superiority of the produce of Manchester and Glasgow.

Wages in Alsatian Cotton Mills.

In Messrs. Schlumberguer & Bocard's mills, at Guebwillers, the wages were stated to me to be—

	f.	*c.*		*f.*	*c.*	
Spinners - - -	2	–	to	3	–	per day.
Women - - -	1	50	,,	2	–	,,
Girls - - -	1	–	,,	–	–	,,
Slubbers - - -	1	40	,,	1	50	,,

In the "*Rapport*," however, given in by these gentlemen in the year 1829, to a Government Commission of Inquiry in France, I find the following different return:—

	f.	*c.*		*f.*	*c.*	
Men - - -	1	40	to	2	–	per day.
Women - - -	1	–	,,	1	20	,,
Children - - -	–	40	,,	–	70	,,

The increased aptitude of the workmen since 1829, may, in some degree, account for this discrepancy; but from other inquiries, I am convinced the former of these statements is the maximum, and therefore not the average rate of payment.

Hours of Labour, and Education of Factory Children.

The hours of labour always exceed 13, and are often 14 of actual work, children as well as adults. There is no factory regulation law in France. Some spinners, however, like the Messrs. Schlumberguer & Co., provide schooling for the children in their employ, and instruct those who evince talent in higher branches of education. On this interesting subject, Mr. Nicolas Schlumberguer writes to me thus:—"The moral and physical condition of the working class in general remains nearly stationary; there are made here and there efforts for its amelioration, which have had happy results; but up to this time the opposition of the great majority of the manufacturers has prevented the government from proposing to the Chambers any regulations analogous to those which exist in England, on the age of admission of children in the factories, and in the duration of work." I derived much more information from Mr. Schlumberguer at my visit to him and subsequently, but chiefly on the subject of cotton-spinning, on which, perhaps, enough has been said already.

Lyon.

Lyon.

I have but very little to say with regard to Lyon. Dr. Bowring has already reported the condition of the weavers of Lyon, Chamond, St. Etienne and Avignon, in such detail and with such accuracy, that it would have been waste of time on my part to have done more than ascertain what essential differences have manifested themselves since the labours of the learned gentleman.

In general terms I may remark, that the commerce of Lyon, and almost equally that of the other above-named towns, is in a most flourishing condition: wages are excellent; and there are greater demands made for the products of the Lyon looms than they can supply.

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Nevertheless, the long stagnation incidental to the American crisis, caused, since Dr. Bowring's visit, considerable distress, from the effects of which, the recent developement of trade has but just relieved them; neither have all the departments of Lyonese weaving yet resumed their former rates of wages. In the plain goods (*articles unis*), (in which you will recollect that Zürich is competing with France), little is now done at all in the city. This description of goods has been carried (since Dr. Bowring's visit in 1834) almost entirely into the country, where, of course, food and lodging is to be had at much lower prices, and where, as the workmen are more scattered, and less able to concert measures for keeping wages up, wages are more easily lowered. The necessity for lowering them, however, was apparent to me whilst at Zürich; and I was as much convinced, by what I saw there, that Lyonese wages in plain silks must fall, as if I had already ascertained the fact.

The conflict which formerly existed between the *chefs d'ateliers* (who are the owners of the workshops, containing from one to ten looms) and their journeymen, called *compagnons*, goes on in the country just as much as it formerly did in Lyon. In the town much greater harmony subsists, as wages have, for the most part, risen. It is usual for the *chef d'atelier* to share the wages paid with the weaver or *compagnon* who weaves the web, the former supplying lodging, and upholding the loom, and defraying every contingent expense.

Rates of Wages in 1834 and 1838.

The following are examples of the changes in the rate of payment by the *fabricant*:—

	1834.	1838.
	fr. *c.*	*fr.* *c.*
Common plain velvets (per ell) - - -	3 50	5 50
Light plain satins - - - - -	– 60	– 70
Gros de Naples, fine quality, plain - -	– 70	– 90
Ditto - light - ditto - - - -	– 50	– 60
Common figured silks - - - - -	– 80	1 –
Rich - ditto - - - - - -	1 –	1 50

There are, among the figured silks for waistcoats, articles paid as high as 5*f.* and 6*f.* the ell.

There is a new description of shawls, of which the ground is thick satin, with velvet flowers, having the appearance of being embossed, on it, of singular beauty and elaborate design, for which as much as 12*f.* per day, gross wages, are paid to the *chefs d'ateliers*.

If a *chef* gained 2*f.* clear per day in 1834, he will gain at least 2*f.* 50*c.* now; and the *compagnon* must be an idle fellow if he earns less than 1*f.* 75*c.* Many earn upwards of 2*f.* per day.

It appeared also that a great moral improvement had taken place in Lyon, in consequence of the removal of some of the lower-paid weavers to the country.

The independence of the weavers of Lyon is very great, and this is caused by the character of the industrial system pursued. The *fabricant*, of whom there are between 500 and 600 in Lyon, merely gives out the pattern and silk to the *chef d'atelier*, to whom is entrusted the entire task of producing the web through all the manifold difficulties of the complex operations incidental to the manufacture. The money paid is the object of separate barter, and is generally fixed at joint meetings of weavers and the *fabricans*. Continual disputes used to occur between them, which are now for the most part transferred to the *chefs d'ateliers* and their *compagnons*, the latter having become extremely exorbitant in their demands. These form the least respectable class of weavers in Lyon. Having no fixed home, they are a fluctuating population, and have neither the stability or the activity of those who are entrusted with responsibility, and to whom it imparts respectability. They sometimes, however, amass considerable savings, and occasionally, though not often, establish themselves as *chefs d'ateliers*.

Apprentices.

In addition to the *compagnons*, or journeymen, there are also apprentices of both sexes, to whom the master teaches his trade, either for a sum of money, or a period, during which the profits of the apprentice's labour belong to the master. When they are sufficiently practised in their art, the master gives the apprentice

apprentice a task to perform, and whatever they do above, is their own profit. If he fails in doing it, an indemnity is recoverable by the master.

Physical Condition of the Weavers.

With the high wages gained by the weavers, they are, of course, enabled to live well, and spend no inconsiderable sum on the aggregate in their Monday and Sunday recreations. The usual meals, and their cost, of a *compagnon*, or common weaver, are thus accurately stated by Dr. Bowring:—"$1\frac{1}{2}$ lb. of bread, 30 *c.* or 3 *d.* (the lb. being 18 ounces, and the best bread); quarter litre of wine, $12\frac{1}{2}$ *c.*; dinner, 25 *c.*; cheese, 10 *c.*; supper, 10 *c.*" The dinner will consist generally of soup, and often of a bit of meat in it. Rent varies from 3 *l.* to 5 *l.* per annum, for two or three rooms. Many of the *compagnons* are boarded by their employers at about 6 *d.* per day.

Hours of work vary from 12 to 15.

In appearance the weavers are an emaciated, miserable-looking set of beings: they are deformed and undersized. The parts of the dirty town of Lyon in which the weavers are principally located are close and filthy, especially those lying between the Saone and the Mountains de St. Just and de Fourvières. Many individuals are often crowded together in a small apartment, one room frequently containing the man and his wife, two or three children, and a workman and his wife.

However, a clean part of the town has been recently chosen for the residences of many who have removed their quarters, and I am told that a general change is perceptible for the better. Nevertheless, Lyon strongly reminded me of Glasgow.

Education.

The education of the adult weavers is deficient, and likewise that of the children, who are occupied from an early age at the loom, or rather in the preparation of bobbins, &c.

School of Arts.

Lyon beats us, and indeed the rest of the world, chiefly by the superiority of her patterns, and the excellence of the taste displayed in designs. Most of ours are copied from theirs. This superiority is greatly due to the School of Arts, and the liberal encouragement of this branch of science by the French government, who pay 3,000 *f.* per annum to the support of the school of St. Peter alone. The city contributes 20,000 *f.* besides. Not only are the students (180 in number) gratuitously instructed in the various branches of drawing and modelling, but there is a professor expressly to teach the "*mise en carte*," that is, the adaptation of designs to the loom. A constant supply of talent is thus poured forth on the artistical department of the trade of Lyon: hence the signal superiority France maintains in this branch of manufacture. It is a flagrant stigma to us that similar means are not had recourse to in England, to promote the improvement of the art of designing.

Looms in Lyon.

The number of looms in the city and its environs has fluctuated considerably. In 1788, a census, made by order of the consuls, gave 14,777 looms, of which 5,442 were idle, owing to some sudden and temporary caprice of female fashion. The workmen of all sorts employed were 58,500. In 1801 the looms had fallen to 7,000, owing to the war, and other causes. In 1834 the number of looms was 17,281, of which 1,358 were idle. The master-weavers occupy about 7,000, the *compagnons* 6,854, and the children and apprentices 2,300. This was the prefect's estimate four years ago; and as many again were then estimated in the suburbs. Now a larger number belong to the latter, but the aggregate will scarcely be much increased.

The gross produce of the Lyonese looms is estimated now (1838) at 135,000,000 *f.* value per annum.

Tarare.

Tarare.

This is the centre of an immense muslin district, extending over a large range of the Rhone mountains. The following is a written statement of the state of the trade, and those concerned in it, from M. Leutner, père, a gentleman distinguished among the industriels of France, alike for his elaborate acquaintance with the manufactures of the country, and for his enlightened views on commerce. I was not fortunate enough to find M. Leutner at home when I visited Tarare, and therefore insert the letter he did me the favour of sending me, in reply to some questions I addressed to him:—

 "Sir,

France.

Report from *J. C. Symons*, Esq.

"Sir, Tarare, 3 November 1838.

"I have the honour to reply to the several questions you have put to me.

"1. The productions of Tarare are modeled on those of the Indies, for its large clear starched goods (*grands claires*); on those of England and Scotland for its hard and soft book-muslins, mulls and jaconets; and on those of Switzerland for its figured muslins and lappets and embroideries. The articles of Tarare are as perfect as those of the above-named different nations, and possess infinite variety. Muslins are made from 22*c.* up to 18*f.* the ell.

"2. I send you herewith some patterns, with the variation of prices, &c.

"3. The changes which have occurred in the *rate* of wages during the last 15 and 16 years proceed from increased aptitude in the workmen, and especially from foreign competition, which has forced our manufacturers to diminish the rate of wages.

"4. Since this diminution of wages, our weavers in general have become very sober; those of the country live only on soup, on potatoes, milk and large coarse rye-bread, which your work-people in England know nothing of. Our working classes eat meat but rarely, and drink but little wine, and still less of brandy, during the week. Their physical strength is tolerably good.

"5. The primary schools, and those of the 'Frères de la Doctrine Chrétienne' begin to exercise a happy influence on the morality of the children of our workmen; but these effect less progress in the country than in the town.

"6. A portion of our weavers in the country gain only 75*c.* (7½*d.*) to 1*f.* 25*c.* (1*s.*) per day, those of the town from 2*f.* to 2*f.* 50*c.*, and sometimes 3*f.*, according to their skill. The manufacturer furnishes only the reed and the upper mounting, all the rest being at the expense of the workmen. No reduction is made from the wages for the use of these articles.

"Those who are in the town weave all the year; those in the country, *at the outside, not above seven months in the year*, the remaining five months being occupied in agricultural employment. As nearly all the fathers of our weavers in the country are small proprietors themselves, the weavers are connected with the land, and are consequently not turbulent; our industry therefore escaped the disasters of which Lyons was the theatre in 1834 and 1832.

"I trust, sir, these details will be agreeable to you; and I beg of you to receive the renewed assurance of the very distinguished consideration with which I have the honour to be your very devoted

(signed) "*Phil. Leutner*, Père."

The other information I received at Tarare entirely corroborates the purport of the above letter. It is necessary, however, to state, that the actual earnings of the weavers have not fallen in the same proportion as the rate of wages, except for the town weavers. It is, I need hardly remark, impossible to form any accurate estimate of their real condition by the mere money wages they receive; for the profits of agricultural occupation render their weaving wages merely an indefinite portion of their total income, which can only be estimated approximatively. Nevertheless, I think it may be safely assumed, that a town weaver nets on the average 30 *sous* per day, and the country weaver 25 *sous* for 14 hours' work. They appear to me to work as hard as the Scottish weavers, though scarcely in the same manner; the latter will work desparately for three or four hours, in order that he may loiter and stand at his door an hour; the Tarare weaver (and the remark holds good elsewhere in France) keeps continually shuffling along, if I may so express it, and completes as much in 14 hours' sluggish work as the Scottish weaver by broken portions of quicker work, extended over the same period.

The character of the Tarare weavers is that of a quiet, simple people, who have few wants, and but limited intelligence, in spite of the recent efforts of the priests to enlighten them.

Prices of Muslins.

The prices of the Tarare muslins evince an instructive example of the effects of the protective system of the French tariff.

1. 13^{oo} book-muslin, soft finish chain and weft, about 100^{s}. and 120^{s}, 32 English inches wide, 1*f.* per ell, of 44 inches.

2. 15^{oo}

France.

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2. 15°° book-muslin, soft finish, 55 inches wide, chain and weft about 150^s, 165^s, 2*f.* 75*c.* per ell.

3. 16°° soft book-muslin, 180^s and 190^s, width 49 inches, price 3*f.* per ell.

4. 28°° Scotch cambric, four shots over, 55 inches wide, Nos. 220, 235, price 6*f.* per ell.

Wages have been reduced 40 per cent. since 1823, chiefly, in my opinion, from a rise in the price of finishing the goods, and also from an increase of hands.

The Messrs. Macculoch, from Glasgow, have a finishing establishment at Tarare, the only one in that part of France; and though their prices are said to be extremely high, they finish the Tarare goods in a style fully equal to that of Glasgow. They purchase all the fine yarn spun by Messrs. Houldsworth, of Manchester, which is sent to France, and supply the French manufacturers with it. Not only do the Tarare manufacturers find it to their interest to pay the duty, carriage and commission, on the finest yarns (above 170^s), but they also buy all the yarn they use above 120^s, from Manchester also: it is sent sealed through France into Switzerland, paying the transit dues; and from Switzerland it is smuggled back again into Tarare, by way of Chambery.

I have it on the best authority, and am prepared with evidence to its truth, that Tarare alone consumes 40,000 *l.* sterling of English cotton twist, one-third of which are numbers below 170^s, and, consequently, contraband; the rest in numbers up to 320^s. The cost of smuggling these yarns into France varies from 30 to 40 per cent. on the value, which the "protecting duty" on the French manufacture gives to the Swiss smuggler, and certainly a very handsome present it is. It is impossible to converse 10 minutes with a French manufacturer without discovering some injurious effect of her benighted commercial system; and, consequently, of the infatuation of restrictions on international commerce.

Normandy.

Normandy.

The weavers of Normandy are the worst off in France, simply because they are rather more numerous in comparison with the demand for their labour. And the reason why they are so numerous, results from the easy sort of work done in that part of the country. Instead of muslins and silks, like at Tarare, Mulhousen or Lyon, requiring skilled hands, and therefore limiting the number of those in the field of competition, Normandy produces pullicates, domestics and other coarse articles: consequently I found the weavers there *who had no means of other employment* as badly off, or very nearly so, as in the west of Scotland, with which the goods produced by the Norman looms are in direct competition in third markets, whilst they nearly exclude us from their own.

At the same time, whilst the wages of Norman weavers are, if any thing, lower than in Scotland, it must not be forgotten that provisions are at least 20 per cent. cheaper. So that no great difference is perceptible in the condition of the two classes; and were I to be forced (putting the love of country aside) to choose, whether I would be a pullicate weaver in Scotland or in Normandy, I think I should be sorely puzzled which to select, or rather which to consider the greater infliction.

Wages and Prices of Goods.

I proceed to establish both the lowness of wages in Normandy, and the cheapness of the goods produced from patterns, and their prices, which I carefully collected at Rouen, &c:—

1. Checked pullicate, 10°°, 33 inches by 30, Nos. 20 chain, 35 weft; wages 24*f.* for 16 dozen; woven in about 20 days; price per dozen 6*f.*
2. Ditto 12°°, 2 shots over; Turkey red-coloured check, best colour, yard square; wages 39*f.* for 11 dozen; sale price 13*f.*
3. Thick blue twilled calicoes for men's smock-frocks, 10°°, 45 inches wide, coarse yarn; wages 46*f.* for 120 ells; woven in 35 days; price 1*f.* 80 *c.* to 2*f.*; 8 or 10 per cent. discount for cash.

These are gross wages: there will fall to be deducted, loom-rent, fuel, light, agency, &c. which may be thus estimated, taking the article No. 3. as a standard: 1. Agency 5*f.* (including the use of reed, which the agent furnishes); light and fuel, 3 *sols* per day (1 ½ *d.*) Other incidentals, wear and tear &c. 3*f.* 50*c.*, making 10*f.* 10 *c.*, which, deducted from the 46*f.* gross wages in 35 days, leaves as nearly as possible

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possible 1*f.* per day, or 5*s.* per week. This may be taken as above, rather than below, the average, which fluctuates according to the immediate demand, &c. &c. from 5*f.* to 6*f.* weekly. Children and women are both occupied in weaving at proportionate earnings. About 4*f.* is given over the above for winding.

Setting Potatoes.

The farmers here adopt the same custom towards the weavers as in Scotland, of allowing them land to set potatoes gratis, which is a prevalent custom in Normandy.

Diet.

The weavers live chiefly on vegetable soup, and the coarsest sort of bread, at 1*d.* or 1½*d.* per pound.

Education.

The children are beginning to be a little better instructed. There has been great rivalry between the schools superintended by the catholic "Frères" and those of the "Instruction Mutuelle." I visited both these establishments in Rouen, in company with Mons. Paumier, a highly respected French protestant minister. I found no weavers' children. In fact the children evidently appeared, from their dress and cleanliness, to belong exclusively to persons in the easier classes of life. The exact same spirit of conflict goes on between these two sets of schools in France, as between the British and National school parties in England. In both, the priesthood desire and strive to subject all education to their exclusive control. Mons. Paumier and other persons to whom I put the question, agreed in the statement, that in the entire population of Rouen there might be one-third of the children under 12 years of age (but not many more), who could not write and read. Mons. Paumier advocates a small payment being attached to instruction, except to the poorest. Education is decidedly on the advance in Normandy, which Mons. Paumier attributes in some degree to the reiterated advice of the radical newspapers to the people to do so. Mons. Paumier corroborated the impression I had imbibed, that the weavers were extremely ill off. In fact they are there, as in Scotland, worse off than any other class.

Wages of other Workmen.

Cotton Spinners.

The following are the ordinary wages earned in the Norman spinning-mills, with which I was favoured by my friend M. Fauquet Lemaître, one of the leading manufacturers of France. Spinners from 15*f.* to 20*f.* per week, working from 80 to 84 hours; women and girls employed at the carding and drawing operations gain from 7*f.* to 10*f.* The power-loom weavers earn from 12*f.* to 16*f.* per week. No change in these wages has occurred for eight years. Day-labourers earn from 10*f.* to 12*f.* per week. Mons. Lemaître is further of opinion, that though there is "very great distress" among the manufacturers and fabricans, there are very few of the working classes without employment. There is no question that the distress among the latter is confined to the weavers. Having ascertained to a certainty that the disparity was very great between the latter and other classes, I suspected at once that there must be combination in the case. After some inquiry on the subject, I found that not only did associations exist, but that not long since they were of a very formidable character. About seven years since, an armed body of combinators seized a manufacturer of the name of Arnotisant, marched him down the boulevards, and debated among themselves as to the choice of a convenient branch to hang him upon. A regiment were obliged to be called out. And on another occasion a man was killed, and on another a gens d'armes. These demonstrations of physical force are quelled; but enough of the same spirit remains to account fully for the disparity of wages between those who can and those who cannot combine.

The wages in the Norman cotton-mills are the highest I met with on the continent, and average 9*f.* per head per week, calculating men, women and children together.

Dye.

Best red Turkish, 5*f.* to 5*f.* 50*c.* the kilogramme. A good deal of this is carried on here. The workmen gain 2*f.* per day.

Printed Cottons.

The manufacturers of Rouen pride themselves greatly on the superiority of these productions; and it is but justice to them to say, that I have seldom seen printed cottons so good in colour and texture at 32 inches width for 7*d.* per ell of 44 inches, as those of Rouen at that price. They told me that they felt assured of being able very soon to compete in these articles with Manchester in third markets.

General Prospects of Norman Manufacture.

Whenever coal is allowed by the Government to be imported free of duty, and whenever the interests of the nation are considered more important than those of a very

a very small junta of French iron-mine monopolists, an incubus will be removed from the Norman cotton-mills, which, advantageously placed as Normandy is, both for the import of the raw material and the export of her manufactures, by Havre, will not fail to give her such an ascendancy over our high-waged produce, as will make us heartily repent the hour when France has wisdom enough to throw off the fetters of her "protective duties."

There are 230 spinning-mills in Normandy and the Seine, and 920,000 spindles. I happened, just as I was leaving France, to fall in with the Messrs. Fyfe, of Queen-street, Glasgow, one of the largest houses for pullicates and ginghams in Scotland: I showed them the pullicate which I have above described as No. 2, (a red check); they both expressed themselves surprised at the evenness of the workmanship, and the beauty of the colour, declaring it to be the best foreign article they had ever seen of the sort. Yet I selected this myself from an immense multitude of others, and it certainly was not a picked pattern.

Elbeuf.

Elbeuf is the largest cloth manufactory in France, and is rapidly increasing in the extent of its trade. The weavers here are in very easy circumstances. As there are no particular results from my inquiries at Elbeuf beyond what are contained in the following letter to me from the Maire of Elbeuf, who is also a very large manufacturer and a most intelligent person, it will suffice to transcribe it. Elbeuf.

"M. Symons, Commissaire du Gouvernment Anglais.

"Sir, Elbeuf, 4 November 1838.

"The inquiry with which you are charged in the name of your Government, interests humanity too much to permit me to be other than anxious to afford you every information you desire.

"The working classes of our town of Elbeuf enjoy in general easy circumstances; they have always lived happily, for two very powerful reasons; the first, because our manufacturers are constantly in their workshops, work themselves with their workmen, know their wants, and identify themselves with all that happens to them for good or evil; the second, because the price of weaving varies very little, the proportion between times of prosperity and times of distress being 20 per cent. at most on the amount of wages, and that only in certain departments.

"The work-people are divided into three classes, the adults, the day-labourers and the weavers.

"The adults receive a salary which varies according to their age, their strength, their intelligence, from 75*c.* to 1*f.* 50*c.*; largest number receive the average of 1*f.* 10*c*: I class as adults, young men from 12 to 18 years of age; children from 9 to 12 gain 50*c.* to 75*c.* per day. The day-labourers, taken at large from 18 years to 60, are paid from 1*f.* 50*c.* to 2*f.* per day, 1*f.* 75*c.* being the average; this class is but little intelligent.

"The weaver gains from 2*f.* to 3*f.* per day, the ordinary average being 2*f.* 50*c.* The women receive from 75*c.* to 1*f.* per day. The young girls from 9 to 16 years old earn from 50*c.* to 80*c.* The day's work begins at five in summer, and ends at eight in the evening; half an hour for breakfast and an hour for dinner. In winter they work from seven to ten hours.

"The morality of the weavers leaves improvement to be desired; the generality are, however, good, but a part are very dissolute.

"It is to be feared that, unless some prompt remedy be applied, the ancient morality of our working classes will be wholly obliterated. One means very efficacious would be, the attentive education of children, and particularly their later admission into the work-room. I have directed my most earnest efforts to the accomplishment of instruction since I have administered the affairs of the town. We possess now at Elbeuf a gratuitous school of *enseignment mutual* for boys, a gratuitous institution for girls, an infant school, a gratuitous Sunday school for the adult workmen; independently of these public institutions, there are a multitude of private schools; but the good of these institutions is in a great degree frustrated by the capital vice of introducing children into factories at an age when evil example so easily misleads them.

"I have presented a memoir to the government, who did me the honour to consult me.

"Here is the system I expounded:

"To admit children from two to six years in the infant school; to receive

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them from six to twelve in the public schools on leaving the infant schools; to prohibit their entrance into the factories before the age of 12 years, and only then if furnished with a certificate of being able to read, write and cast accounts, as well as that they should be of a suitable strength of constitution.

"My principle is, that children thus instructed in morality from their young age, will be found, after 10 years' training, to have imbibed notions of integrity sufficiently to resist evil example, and in body sufficiently robust, from the absence of all manual labour up to that age, to support the labour of the loom, without injuring the business of the manufacturer, by the withdrawal of the children for education during labour hours.

"Such are, sir, the notes which I have sketched in haste; you will find them necessarily incomplete, for such a subject would admit of long development; but I place myself at your entire disposition, if any information be further desirable.

"Please to accept, sir, the assurance of my distinguished consideration.

"*Lefort Henry*, Maire."

The capital of Elbeuf is increasing, and wages of course share in the prosperity of the capitalist. In fact, the same marked difference which exists in favour of the woollen weavers in Scotland, is equally observable on the continent.

St. Quentin.

St. Quentin.

This is the central town of another large weaving district, of which the chief articles are muslins, striped and spotted.

Prices of Tissues and Wages.

The prices of these goods, and the wages paid for weaving them, are as follows:—12^{oo} and 14^{oo} checked muslins (not coloured), of a coarse description, 32 inches wide, are sold for 90 *c.* (9 *d.*) per ell of 44 inches, and the weaving paid at the rate of 1 *f.* (10 *d.*) per day: a still coarser description is sold for 65 *c.* or 70 *c.* (6 ½ *d.* to 7 *d.*) per ell, and the weaver gains 8 *d.* per day. Fine lappets, 32 inches wide, price 1 *f.* 90 *c.* (1 *s.* 7 *d.*) the ell, and weaver's wages 1 *f.* 25 *c.*, or 1 *s.* per day. Very fine corded muslins, 20^{oo}, price 1 *f.* 70 *c.* per ell (39 inches wide), and wages 1 *f.* 25 *c.* to 1 *f.* 50 *c.* per day.

These prices are of course wholesale, with five or eight per cent. discount ready money. The wages are gross, the winding only being paid by the manufacturer.

The following is a statement of average weaving wages given me by Monsieur Leut, one of the largest manufacturers in St. Quentin.

"The weavers in the country gain—children, from 6 to 12 *sous* (3 *d.* to 6 *d.*) per day; the women, from 14 to 20 *sous* (7 *d.* to 10 *d.*); the men from 30 to 60 *sous* (1 *s.* 3 *d.* to 2 *s.* 6 *d.*)

"The work-people in the town of all ages and sexes work 13 hours by day. In the country the hours are not regulated, but they work nearly as much as in the town, especially in winter. Nearly the whole of the artisans are paid by the piece, whether weavers or cotton-spinners."

From my own investigation, I am convinced that 30 *sous* (15 *d.*), is rather above than below the average of the adult male weaver's earnings in the country.

Agricultural Employment.

Again, I found a large portion of the weaver's time in summer occupied in out-door labour, either on their own bit of land, or on that of a neighbour. To estimate their wages for this agricultural labour would be impossible, for they are very frequently repaid by a reciprocity of services, and still oftener by food.

I am, however, prepared to affirm, that those who weave are not in a distressed condition, and that they are at any rate no worse off than their neighbours.

Cotton-Mill Wages.

I took an exact account of the wages in the cotton-mills with which St. Quentin abounds. In one large establishment I found the average per head per week 7 *f.*; in another, 6 *f.* 43 *c.*; and in the third, 7 *f.* At Bolbec, in Normandy, it was, as I have stated, 9 *f.* The quality of the machinery often makes the difference.

Food.

The price of food was as follows, when I was at St. Quentin:—

Bread (white), 36 *c.* per kilo., or 3 ½ *d.* for 2 ⅕ lbs. avoirdupois.
Beef (common sort), 55 *c.*, 5 ½ *d.* per lb. of 18 oz.
Veal and mutton, 65 *c.*, or 6 ½ *d.* per lb. of 18 oz.
Pork, about the same price.

Rent.

Rent is high at St. Quentin. A small room and closet costs 11 *f.*, or 9 *s.* 2 *d.* per month, without furniture. In the country, 3 *f.* or 4 *f.* per month.

Coal

Coal is about 2*f.* 10*c.* the hectolitre, or 22 imperial gallons, or 220·467 lbs. avoirdupois. France.

The working classes make no complaints here; they seem all of them pretty well supplied with the necessaries, and many of the comforts, of life. They are all well clothed, and have plenty of vegetables to eat; little meat is consumed, or desired, by them. In the country it is a common practice, as in Scotland, for the farmers to give the use of land for setting potatoes in; only in the neighbourhood of St. Quentin the farmers usually find both seed and manure, receiving half the produce as their share. This is an advantage to the labourer, or he would not avail himself of it. Physical Condition of Working Classes.

The morals of the artisans of the town are said to be very bad; that is to say, they are very fond of gaiety, and frequent the ginguettes, or public-houses, where dancing is the chief amusement. Girls frequently attend the factories on a Monday morning, decked out in the ribbons with which they are to appear at the evening rendezvous, not to lose time in dressing after their work is done. Morals.

There is a good deal of bobbinet or tulle manufactured here, of which it may be useful to state the wages, and some other particulars. Tulle or Bobbinet.

In St. Quentin and the environs there are about 700 bobbinet frames; to each of these there are two workmen, whose wages do not exceed 1*f.* 50*c.* to 1*f.* 75*c.* per day. These descriptions of frames are scarcely sufficiently profitable to be worked at all, the demand declining constantly in this branch of the trade. There are, however, 40 or 50 meckling frames, for the produce of which a considerable demand has arisen, and on which the wages amount to 6*f.* and 7*f.* per day. Several new frames are now making for this work, and of course both the profits of the manufacturer (at present immense), and the wages of the workmen, will fall ere long. English yarn was exclusively used for these goods, but French yarn has come latterly much into use. The Lille spinners now supply many of the tulle manufacturers. I have heard, however, complaints that yarns are often sold for finer than they are, the length being deficient.

The Messrs. Tausin and Macculoch (brother to the gentleman at Tarare) have here the largest finishing establishment in France.

LE NORD.

Roubaix.

Of the various weaving and spinning districts of this manufacturing departement there are none more prosperous than Roubaix, which has increased prodigiously within the last 10 or 15 years. Roubaix.

The articles chiefly manufactured here are Thibets, waistcoat-pieces, and thick cotton goods.

There are about 12,000 looms in this district, of which half are Jacquard looms. These latter are principally in factories, the manufacturers finding it necessary to preserve the privacy of their patterns.

The demand having increased so rapidly, wages have also risen. A weaver will, on the cotton goods, earn on an average 30 *sous* (15*d.*) per day; on the second-class work, from 30 to 40 *sous* (15*d.* to 20*d.*); and on the Jacquard loom, from 2*f.* to 5*f.* per day, the average being about 3*f.*: these are gross wages. Net earnings will be, weekly, about 12*f.* or 13*f.* for the Jacquard weaver, and from 6*f.* to 10*f.* for the plain weavers. Women and children obtain plenty of employment at the mills. Wages had risen by above one-third in the last few years. Wages of Weavers.

Wages in most of the other departments of labour (not manufacturing), are, for men, 2*f.* to 3*f.* per day, and for women, 1*f.* 25*c.*

Thibets of woollen weft and warp, 11°°, 3 shots over, chains No. 22^{s}, weft No. 38^{s}: wages, 17 *sols* (8½*d.*) per ell of 44 inches, amounting to about 20*f.* or 22*f.* on an average per week; out of which the weaver pays for winding weft, and every thing but winding the chains. The earnings of the weaver, therefore, on these goods could not be less than 2*f.* 50*c.*, or 2*s.* per day, for 14 hours' work; and weavers have admitted as much to me. Prices of Articles and Wages in Woollen Factory.

I inspected a woollen-spinning factory belonging to M. Delatre. The spinners were earning from 20*f.* to 24*f.* per week net, as a matter of course; and I was assured, that the previous week one man had received, for seven days' work, no less than 60*f.*, out of which he had, however, to pay 19 francs to his piecer; and

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it is by no means uncommon for them to earn 30*f.* net. The girls earned about 7*f.* 50*c.* per week, and the children 3*f.* per week.

I was assured that they worked 15 hours in the mill: if so, I can only say I never saw healthier-looking people in any factory, except that of Mr. Edmund Ashworths, of Egerton. The rooms were all high, clean, and well ventilated; and the machinery, though not of the newest description, extremely good. It was built by some engineer at Reims, whose name I forget, and the yarn spun was fine and even, and superior to what I have sometimes seen in Scottish mills.

Food.

The labouring classes live mostly on meat, soup, potatoes and beer; they have a regular meat-meal, generally, on four days per week. Price of meat, about 60*c.* per lb. of 18 oz. Bread (Nov. 26th), at 40*c.* (4*d.*) the kilogramme, or 2⅕ lbs.

Moral Condition.

The morals of the working classes here are decidedly worse than in most other districts. My friend M. Mimerel, the president of the Chambre de Commerce at Roubaix, declared that they were "quarrelsome, turbulent, and far less happy than when they had less wages." Without pledging myself to these opinions, I regret to say, that, from some conversation I had with more than one family among the weavers themselves, I am compelled to believe M. Mimerel is far from calumniating the body. They drink, for the most part, to excess.

Education progresses badly; for children are admitted into the factories as early as ever the cupidity of the parents induces them to send them; and there are many of seven and eight years old there.

Combinations.

These have been occasionally attempted; and rather than that the least reduction of wages should take place, they support one another in striking. On one of these occasions, 200 weavers came in a body to M. Delatre (who is also a manufacturer of woven goods), to ask for their wages. He told them to finish their webs first. They went away, and finding that other manufacturers had reduced their wages also, they continued their work. These legitimate means of preventing undue reductions are, however, the extent to which the Roubaix weavers ever go.

Tourcoing.

Tourcoing.

This is another weaving town, though containing many fewer looms than Roubaix.

The articles woven here are chiefly coarse cotton goods and linens.

Wages.

The weavers gain about 9*f.* or 10*f.* gross per week. These wages have been augmented by about a tenth during the last 10 years.

The other working classes (adult males) gain from 1*f.* 75*c.* to 2*f.* 25*c.* per day.

The weavers are the most moral class in this town, and they attend to the education of their children, and seem contented with their condition.

Price of Food.

Bread, 32*c.* (3⅕*d.*) per kilogramme (2⅕ lbs.)
Meat, 1*f.* 10*c.* - - ditto - - ditto.
Coals, 2*f.* 15*c.* (1*s.* 10*d.*) per hectolitre of 22 gallons.
Rent, average for weavers, 100*f.* (4*l.*)

Armentières.

Armentières.

The chief articles produced here are calicots, ticking for mattrasses, stuffs and tulle.

Wages.

The weavers here gain something less than other workmen.

Those weaving	calicoes	gain from	8*f.*	to 9*f.*	per week.
,,	ticking	,,	9	to 10	,,
,,	stuffs	,,	9	to 10	,,
,,	tulle	,,	13		,,

The manufacturer furnishes the winding, otherwise the above are the gross wages.

Food.

Food is the same price as at Tourcoing, and rent about 20 per cent. cheaper.

Where large young families exist, occasional distress occurs; but this is relieved by the Bureau de Bienfaisance. The children are put to work at an early age.

There

There are gratuitous schools for all who like to profit by them, where children are received from six years old, till they have received their first communion. Thus, up to 12 years old, education costs the parents literally nothing. Education

The vice of drinking gains ground greatly in this departement; and in all the communications I have had with the civil authorities in the north of France, the same statement has been made to me. Morals.

Calais.

Calais. Bobbinet.

Bobbinet forms the only manufacture of Calais;—it was introduced there from Nottingham twenty years ago, and the same machines for the common net continue to be used, which cost about 100 *l.* each. There are about 400 of these machines in and near Calais, 100 of the fancy net machines, and 40 of what are called tatting machines.

Wages.

The wages of the plain bobbinet weavers will average about 10*f.* per week clear; those of the fancy net work from 25*f.* to 35*f.* per week; those who work at the tatting frames (the highest skill only being competent) earn from 45*f.* to 70*f.* per week.

The work is done wholly at the factories of the manufacturer.

There has been a gradual fall from the first in the wages of the plain work (which were more than double at first), owing to the ease with which apprentices can learn the plain work. Since the tatting frames have been introduced, there has been likewise a fall in the wages of the fancy weavers. The same work two years and a half ago, paid 12 *sols* per rack, is now paid only seven *sols* ($3\frac{1}{2}$ *d*). A rack is 240 holes in the pattern, and there are three racks on the average in an ell.

Combinations.

At the time of my investigation at Calais in September, I was informed by Mr. Webster, one of the chief manufacturers there, that strikes had occasionally taken place there.

Subsequent information induced me to make further inquiry on the subject, and the following letter from H. M. Consul is the result:—

"Sir, Calais, 4 December 1838.

"The following is the information I have been able to collect, in answer to the questions you proposed to me respecting the tulle trade at Calais:—No combinations exist amongst the workmen for the purpose of maintaining the rate of wages. No strike of work of any consequence has occurred at Calais. The tulle trade is very much on the decline here, and in fact is almost at an end, with the exception of the fancy lace, which is made only by two houses, viz. Webster & Wragg, Englishmen, and Champaillon, a Frenchman; and although the trade in this article succeeds tolerably well at present, it cannot be said to be very brisk.

"I have the honour to be, sir,

"Your most obedient humble servant,

"To J. C. Symons, esq." (signed) "*S. Marshall.*"

A great number of these tulle weavers are Englishmen, who are domiciliated at Calais: they are for the most part comfortably off: their morals are neither particularly good, nor particularly bad. Drinking is increasing at Calais as well as elsewhere.

Summary of Report on France.

Wages.

The wages of the hand-loom weavers are, on the whole, the cost of living being taken into account, higher than in Scotland. In Normandy, and in some few places in Alsace, they are as low; every where else they are higher, or, to speak more correctly, every where else have the hand-loom weavers of France a greater amount of the necessaries and comforts of life.

I have shown that the reverse is the case with all other employments.

Monsieur Dupin has stated 2*f.* 26 *c.* per day as the average payment in the northern, and 1*f.* 90*c.* as the average in the southern provinces. I believe this to be correct in towns only.—There are a number of trades wherein 1*f.* 50*c.* is the average rate of wages per day, but a far greater number earn 2*f.*, which, taking France through, I believe to be as near an estimate as can be formed. They who subsist entirely on the profits of weaving plain goods, fall below 1*f.* 25 *c.*, or 1*s.* per day net wages; but these form a small and insignificant fraction of the working adults of the country; there are no combinations in France induced by

France.

Report from *J. C. Symons*, Esq.

artificial scarcity of food and employment, as in England, to exclude whole classes from the free competition of labour. It follows that the puerile occupation of plain weaving is left to women and children, or to very old men, or at most as a fill-gap, if I may so express it, in the evenings, or during bad weather for out-door labourers. There is, generally speaking, sufficient manly occupation to be had, and consequently men are not reduced to the necessity of having recourse to a trade which requires child's skill and strength, and is consequently remunerated with child's wages.

Nevertheless, although the productive territory is out of all comparison larger in proportion to the population in France, than in Switzerland, the people in France are very far from enjoying the same amount of comfort as the Swiss. There must be at least one-third more of commodities, consequently more remuneration for labour, in proportion to population, in Switzerland than in France. Neither can it be otherwise, when one country is peculiarly incumbered and impoverished by protecting duties, whilst the other is wholly free from them.

Education.

A new law was passed in 1834, authorizing the appropriation of a portion of the municipal funds to defraying educational expenses in each parish. It has resulted, that as regards infant schools, whilst in 1834 they existed only in a few of the largest towns, such as Paris, Lyons, Rouen, Nismes, &c., there are now no less than 172 communes, which expend 174,639*f.* yearly in their support; whilst the total number amounts to 262, containing altogether 29,514 children. A royal ordonnance of December 1837, appointed a commission to form laws for the general guidance of these schools, which has been accordingly ratified by the King last April; though the regulation of all the details are left to the discretion of the several parishes.

Adult Schools.

Adult schools have been likewise formed. The commission had here a more difficult task to execute: the necessary separation of the sexes; and again of each sex, the separation of the older from the younger, have rendered the progress of this most beneficial measure somewhat less speedy. However, 82,985*f.* are already devoted by 1,547 communes to the aid of schools established in them; and the Government, in the 4th year of this enterprise, have the credit and satisfaction of rescuing each year 36,965 of the labouring classes from the infliction of ignorance.

The primary schools which have been formerly established, and which in 1830 contained 1,642,000 children, now contain 2,650,000.

The happiest results attend the increased intelligence of the people; and although the march of knowledge is not nearly so extensive or so rapid as it may be rendered, yet each year in the *recrutement militaire*, the number of those drawn for soldiers who can neither read nor write, is greatly diminishing, one-half of the whole number having formerly, and till 1837, been found ignorant.

The following are the results of a similar scrutiny among a number of criminals promiscuously selected:—

Neither knowing how to read or write - - -	3,172
Knowing imperfectly - - - - - -	1,853
Knowing well - - - - - - -	620
Superior education - - - - - -	248

Although elementary education is certainly progressing in France, real knowledge is far from being equally diffused. There is a very material deficiency in food for the popular mind in France. In almost all the countries where German is the national language, this is not the case; they have their penny magazines in Prussia, and cheap re-prints of all foreign publications of European utility. France is, however, behind us in this duty.

General View of the Progress of French Manufactures.

France exported of manufactured goods—

In 1825 - - - - -	the value of	376,906,000 *francs.*
1827 - - - - -	,,	307,558,000 ,,
1829 - - - - -	,,	332,260,000 ,,
1836 - - - - -	,,	422,973,534 ,,

This does not include goods sent to French colonies.

I have been unable to ascertain the exports of last year, but I have good ground for believing them to have been as little as those of 1829. Of course the

the exports of 1836 form no standard for any country, having been a year of over-production every where.

Nevertheless, were her commerce emancipated from the swaddling-clothes of her protective tariff, I am persuaded France would prove a formidable opponent to us in more respects than her silk trade.

Take her cotton-spinning, for example:

There are 3,000,000 spindles now in activity in France, according to Mr. Nicolas Schlumberguer's estimate, which I believe to be at least 500,000 below the mark.

At the rate of 16 hanks per week average, No. 40^s (a low estimate for long hours), the production of the French mills will average 62,400,000 lbs. of cotton-yarn per year; and it has increased about 10 or 12 per cent. since 1828.

Mr. Schlumberguer, evidently lamenting over the desperate condition of his trade, writes thus to me on the profits realized by the French spinners:—

"We reckon generally in cotton-spinning mills a deterioration of six to seven per cent. on fixed capital; and five to six per cent. as interest on current capital (pour fonds d'établissement que pour roulement.) The spinner who during ten consecutive years receives from his capital *over and above* this profit and deterioration five per cent. *interest, may think himself fortunate.*"

That is to say, 11 per cent. total net profit! I fancy there are few of our cotton-spinners who ever realize within two per cent. of it; and many who would be glad to realize one-half at this moment. But Mr. S. proceeds to assure me that they are not all so much to be pitied:—

"There are some in France who, during the last ten years, have enjoyed a better profit, but the greater part have *scarcely* attained the standard above named."

In the north, where wages are higher, a far more disconsolate tone is held by the cotton-spinners. Monsieur Mimerel, of Roubaix, said two per cent. was as much as they made: and Mr. Fauquet Lemaître writes thus from Bolbec, in addition to personal communication to the same purport:—"The best mule-twist, No. 30^s" (about 33^s of our standard) "sells for 4*f.* the kilogramme" (that is, 1 *s.* 6$\frac{9}{11}$ *d.* per lb., about 3 *d.* dearer than in England); "there has been no variation in wages for eight years, but there has been a great fall in the price of twist to the amount on the average of 2*f.* per kilogramme, the wool having fallen 1*f.* All the spinners gained then, but now all are losers, and that for the last 18 months."

France cannot nearly supply her own consumption: she imports annually at least two millions lbs. of our twist: at least, I find in the *Rapport des Douanes* for the year 1836, 80,171 kilogrammes, or 176,376 lbs. merely of *twist* (*retors*), entered as having paid duty at the Custom-house, and more than the remainder would be smuggled. The following are the returns in the same *Rapport* of the exported cotton and woollen twist, and tissues, and also those for 1832:—

	1836.	1832.
	Kilo^s.	Kilo^s.
Cotton woven articles - -	2,103,690	1,993,596
Ditto - twist - - -	39,534	132,925
Woollen woven articles - -	1,851,084	1,167,674
Ditto - twist - - -	49,931	76,262

The exportations are thus proved to be wholly insignificant, and to diminish as regards yarn.

I confess I wonder how it is that the French spinners manage as well as they do, considering the fearful drawbacks they encounter in three main elements of success, by means of protections to other interests at their expense. In the first place, about 40 or 50 people have iron-mines, and therewith a monopoly. All foreign iron is struck by a high-protecting (in effect a prohibitive) duty. This greatly increases the cost of machinery; and, by rendering a large capital necessary to start business as an engineer, *creates a second monopoly* in machine-making. Secondly, coal is protected; and Monsieur Fauquet Lemaître, of Bolbec, Normandy, assured me that he paid a duty on his English coal higher than the prime cost at Manchester. Then Havre and Marseille have got their protection; and nobody in France, no matter on which side of it he lives, can buy a single bale of cotton which has not paid harbour-dues at one of these two ports, which happening to be at the south and west of France, are, of course,

France.

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peculiarly inconvenient for the extensive spinning-mills established in the east and north. The whole commerce of France is, in fact, crippled and withered by these insane fetters.

Nevertheless, I select the following from a multitude of evidences, that, discouraged as her spinning-trade is, France is about to deprive us of some of our customers. Mr. Cliff, a very large manufacturer of bobbinet at St. Quentin, an Englishman, writes to me thus:

"The prices of cotton are here—

"No. 170^s English, 14 *f.* 20 *c.* per lb.; French, 11 *f.* 87 *c.*

"No. 180^s - ditto - 15 *f.* 40 *c.* per lb.; Ditto - 13 *f.* 12 *c.*

"The French spinners have made since some years past great progress in the manufacture of cotton for the tulle, and some of them rival nearly the English spinners. You see by the above prices that there exists a very great difference in the price of English cottons and French cottons."

Mr. Webster, also a large tulle manufacturer at Calais, said that he should begin now to buy French yarn, instead of English, as the difference in price was no longer rendered a necessary sacrifice by the inferiority of the French yarn, which, he considered, would soon equal ours. He gave the prices as follows: No. 200^s French, 15 *f.* 50 *c.* per lb.; English, 18 *f.* 50 *c.*

In the coarser numbers, to which the smuggler's per centage must be added, we are still less able to compete with them; for temptation to the smuggler is, of course, greatest in the finest yarns, the value being in inverse ratio to the bulk. It is the yarns from 100^s to 200^s we chiefly sell to France; all below 170^s being necessarily smuggled in, because "prohibited."

I had long and highly interesting discussions with Monsieur Mimerel, the president of the Chamber of Commerce at Roubaix, and Monsieur Delesalle, of that of Lille, to both of whom I was introduced by the Prefect; and we conversed on the whole subject of restrictive duties. Both these gentlemen are highly esteemed by the government, and both belong to the old school of political economists, and are both stout advocates of a protecting duty on our flax-yarn. I combated this point with them at great length; and I am persuaded, from various remarks that fell from both, that juster views and a more enlightened policy are not far distant from their ascendancy in France. Mons. Delesalle commented with great severity on the restrictions in our own system, and especially on that which prohibits certain machinery from being exported. He said that France, with all her imposts, had never yet reached such an extremity of narrowness and exclusion.

Whenever France emancipates her manufacturers from their fetters, if we have not previously modified our corn-laws, she will deal a heavy blow at us; as it is, she has confined herself too much within Bishop Berkeley's wall of brass, to be mischievous outside.

As a proof that though darkness is still devoutly desired, light on this matter is no longer to be excluded, I beg to extract a passage from an elaborate and masterly article published in a late number of the "*Revue des Deux Mondes*," intituled, "*Commerce Decennal:*"

"To the exposition (1834) succeeded inquiry; then the same manufacturers who had claimed reward for their progress, came and confessed their inability to compete with the foreigner, and found no other remedy to this mortifying state of things, but in the continuation of almost complete prohibitions. The government could not contend against a desire so general, partaken in by men of every different political opinion, and the French manufacturers have quietly slumbered, contented with the secured consumption of 34 millions of inhabitants. Our industry experienced no alarm at seeing pass over our territory in 1836 332,000,000 *f.* value of foreign merchandize introduced for transit or exportation. What are the causes which prevented us from furnishing them? What causes this preference to Switzerland, Prussia, &c.? What puts these countries in a state to excel us? Nobody knows. Nevertheless we have more need of people to warn us, than to praise us. We remain behind in the progress made by other nations; and if we perceive that after having bought flax of us, they come and sell us linen, we know of no other remedy but to ask to have the linen prohibited, instead of trying to make it as cheap. It is immaterial to the claimants whether France goes with shirts or not, so long as they monopolise a market which they are incompetent to supply."

These

These opinions are gaining ground; and as changes in France are not of particularly slow gestation, I believe her commerce will be emancipated ere very long. France. Report from *J. C. Symons*, Esq.

BELGIUM.

The difficulties in the attainment of information, to which I have already alluded, will prevent my Report of this country from being so detailed as I could wish. Belgium.

The recent prodigious activity of speculation in Belgium, added to the natural resuscitation of her very great productive powers, consequent on the established stability of the new dynasty, have operated in raising wages higher in Belgium than in any other country, except Switzerland, which I visited whilst abroad. Wages.

The hand-loom weavers of Belgium are proportionally better off. The following are the average wages paid for cotton-weavers, which are very numerous in the neighbourhood, particularly of St. Nicholas, &c.:— Hand-loom Weavers.

The first class of cotton-weavers gain 12*f.* average per week; the second class, 8*f.* or 9*f.*; the third class, consisting of apprentices, old men, &c. gain from 3½*f.* to 4½*f.* per week. It is impossible to fix the gain of the women, for their time even in pure weavers' families (of whom there are few), is occupied in great part by household duties, together with winding the bobbins, &c. Cotton-Weavers.

The hours of work vary from 12 to 15, but are seldom less than 13, meal-times excluded.

They warm themselves with a *poële*, or stove, which serves alike for the weaver and the family; and as coal is cheap, but little money is spent on fuel. The loom and its appendages are at the cost of the weaver, but the manufacturer finds the winding. There have been no material variations in the rate of wages for some years past.

The average net gain per week may amount to about 8*f.* for adults, on which a man may live very well; but as hands are often scarce, and the iron districts, Liege, Namur, &c. drain men from the Flemish provinces, 8*f.* is an inferior wage; and, consequently, a man who is a regular weaver, is generally, in some way or other, incapacitated for more profitable labour. This refers to cotton, weavers only; their wages are necessarily lower, for the power-loom has recently deprived many of them of the calicoes they used to weave; and the demand for labour, always increased in some other department of industry by an extension of power-machinery, has hardly, perhaps, had time to realize its compensating effect.

Agricultural employment is much intermixed even with cotton-weaving: as a proof of this, I may name, that one of the chief reasons for the adoption now going on of power-looms, is said to be that of the non-continuity of hand-loom work owing to this agricultural labour; the consequence being, that in order to get in 100 pieces in a given time, yarn for 200 pieces must be given out.

Verviers is the capital of the cloth manufactures, into one of which I got admission; principally, I believe, because the machinery was so old and bad, that it would be impossible for a stranger to derive any advantage from seeing it. Such is not by any means the case with the majority of the immense and numerous mills which flank the road from Verviers to the Prussian frontier. I learnt that the wages in these factories varied from 12*f.* to 20*f.* Cloth-Weavers.

Many of the looms are in the weavers' houses which I visited. I found most of them stated 12*f.* as their clear weekly earnings; and one man who was weaving a coarse cloth, told me, that his master allowed him 5*f.* per week when ill.

Many of the better hands make 14*f.* and 15*f.* per week with ease, working 12 hours per day.

The Belgian silk-weavers are chiefly at Antwerp, and earn, on the average, 1*f.* 50 *c.* per day; they weave merely plain silks. Silk-Weavers.

Most of the linen-weavers weave plain shirting and sheeting. These are completely intermixed with the agriculturists. A small farmer has generally two or three looms, which he or his servants use when not employed out of doors. It is altogether a domestic art, and the web, when woven, is taken by the weaver to the nearest market, measured on a large table, and marked by a Linen-Weavers.

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person who holds that office under the municipal government, and whose sole occupation it is to mark these cloths, without which, the merchant will not buy it. No wages can be attached to this sort of weaving.

There are some damask weavers at Courtrai, &c., who work solely in factories, and who gain from 7*f.* to 18*f.* per week, according to their skill. They have no deductions worth naming from their gross wages.

Wages of other Workmen.

Day-labourers in most of the towns of Belgium gain 2*f.* a-day to 2*f.* 50*c.*

The principal class of workmen in Belgium are those engaged in the coal-mines and the iron-works of Hainault.

I was informed by His Excellency Sir Hamilton Seymour, that he had been told that some of the workmen in the iron districts were in the habit of drinking Champagne; and I can easily believe that such cases may be found. Mr Cockerill, of Liege, employs 2,300 workmen at Seraing alone. These men have very high wages: from the best sources I had access to, I learnt their average earnings would be 3*f.* 50*c.* per day. As, however, I found that a contrary impression exists here as to the rate of wages paid by Mr. Cockerill, I addressed a note to Sir H. Seymour on the subject, who had kindly begged me to apply to him for any further aid I might require. The following answer will probably set the matter at rest, as well as furnish some very valuable information on other points of the inquiry:—

"Sir, Brussels, 11 December 1838.

High Wages in Cockerill's Works, Seraing.

"Sir Hamilton Seymour being in England, it became my duty to open your letter, and to forward its enclosure, which I did. He would, I doubt not, be able to give you more ample information than I can; but on the subject of the wages paid to Mr. Cockerill's labourers, I find, by some notes I made when I visited the establishment at Seraing last September, that the *lowest* wages paid to an able-bodied workman were 2*f.* 70*c.* per day, working six days a-week, and twelve hours per day: this would be about 2*s.* 2*d.* a-day, and they rise from that sum to 15*f.*

Charleroi Works.

"It so happens that there is at this moment an Englishman here in bad health, who has long been working at the iron-works near Charleroi: I learn from him, that a young man first going there, would readily get 2*f.* a-day, and if industrious, would easily rise to 3*f.* or even 4½ *f.* a-day; but that the works being two miles distant from the town (Charleroi), the expenses of living, and particularly lodging, are very heavy. The barrow-work is principally done by women, who earn 1½*f.* per day.

Price of Food.

"The two-pound loaf, of the quality of bread usually eaten by the lower classes at Brussels, costs 32*c.*, (3¼*d.*], and it would probably be less dear elsewhere; from what I could learn at Liege, the expenses of living are little more than two-thirds of what they are at Brussels; but this may be attributed to the extreme cheapness of vegetables, which form a principal article of consumption for the poor.

"I should not have troubled you so early with an answer to your letter, had you not expressed anxiety about the rate of wages paid by Mr. Cockerill, of which I had made a note at the time. I will endeavour to procure every information I can respecting the general prosperity of the Belgian lower classes; but as far as the observation of a traveller goes, in a very long walk I took in the Faubourgs of Liege, just at the time of their returning from their labour, for the purpose of observing them, I was struck by the extreme comfort of their appearance, both as to dress (for I saw no children even without shoes and stockings), and as to their dwellings, which at that hour were very generally open.

"I must beg your pardon for trespassing so far on your time, but I am much interested on this subject, and have therefore perhaps been drawn to a greater length than is proper.

"I have the honour to be, sir,
"Your very obedient servant,
(signed) "*J. W. Waller*,
"Her Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires
during the absence of
Sir Hamilton Seymour."

"To J. C. Symons, esq.,
&c. &c."

The

Belgium.

Report from *J. C. Symons*, Esq.

This letter renders many of the notes I took useless; for Mr. Waller corroborates in each particular the result of my own investigation, to the accuracy of which I rejoice to add the weight of his authority.

As I before observed, the rate of wages being so high in large districts of Belgium, and the demand for labour so great, it follows that wages are nowhere very low, and the working classes of Belgium may be confidently asserted to enjoy exceeding prosperity and comfort.

Agricultural Labourers.

Farm-servants are generally boarded. In the parish of Blandain, which may serve as an example:—

Men, with board, 76*c.* (7½*d.*) per day.
Ditto, without board, 1*f.* 52*c.* (1*s.* 5⅕*d.*) per day.
Women, half the men's wages.

An able-bodied man will support himself comfortably on 7*d.* per day in Belgium in the country.

Bread, such as labourers eat, is about 1¼*d.* per lb. in the country; other food in proportion.

Since the foregoing pages were written, I have received from His Excellency Sir Hamilton Seymour, and likewise from Monsieur Van der Maelen, the celebrated statist at Bruxelles, the following returns of the wages of the artisans and agricultural labourers of the different provinces. They will be seen to exhibit a somewhat lower rate of payment than stated in the communication of Mr. Waller, as in the result of my own researches. This discrepancy Sir Hamilton Seymour, however, thus explains, in a letter I received from him, dated February 8th, 1839:—

"I am disposed to think that the difference between your notes and those of Mr. Waller, as contrasted with the Government Table, is to be accounted for in this manner: that strangers are in the habit naturally of visiting the leading manufactories, and those in the immediate vicinity of large towns, in both of which the highest wages are given; whilst the Government Table was formed upon the average rate of wages throughout the whole provinces. To this I may add, that the manufacturing prosperity of Belgium had not reached that pitch in 1836 which it had attained when you visited the country."

I give the Tables as I received them: to which is subjoined a highly interesting summary of the average prices of grain in Belgium, and the importations and exportations from 1838 to 1839.

COMMERCE BELGE.

PRIX MOYEN de la MAIN D'ŒUVRE, et du SALAIRE des DOMESTIQUES.

PROVINCES.	Prix moyen de la Journée de Travail des Ouvriers employés.									Salaire moyen des Domestiques à la			
										VILLE.		CAMPAGNE.	
										Sexe.		Sexe.	
	à l'Agriculture.	Au Tissage.	à la Maçonnerie.	à la Serrurerie et à la Charpenterie.	Aux Fabriques, Usines et Manufactures.	Aux Carrières, Mines et Forges.	Aux objets de Luxe, Bijouterie, Horlogerie, Ebenisterie.	Aux moyens de Transport par Terre et par Eau.	Chez les Tailleurs et Cordonniers.	Masculin.	Feminin.	Masculin.	Feminin.
	fr. c.	*fr.* c.	*fr.* c.	*fr.* c.	*fr.* c.	*fr.* c.	*fr.* c.	*fr.* c.	*fr.* c.	*fr.* c.	*fr.* c.	*fr.* c.	*fr.* c.
Anvers - -	1 15	1 30	1 70	1 83	1 62	2 25	2 40	1 66	1 40	166 00	106 00	103 00	70 00
Brabant - -	- 93	1 20	1 63	1 61	1 54	1 72	2 71	1 81	1 14	135 84	94 88	117 14	73 28
Flandre Occidentale -	1 13	1 00	1 50	1 59	1 34	- -	1 83	1 53	1 17	148 64	85 82	104 33	71 64
Flandre Orientale - -	1 14	1 29	1 83	1 86	1 59	- -	1 92	1 46	1 39	155 00	109 00	105 00	75 00
Hainaut - -	1 27	1 30	1 86	1 79	1 60	1 87	2 09	1 62	1 32	226 30	142 35	189 80	124 10
Liège - -	1 20	1 40	1 56	1 65	1 40	1 72	2 35	1 65	1 40	193 45	120 45	149 65	94 90
Limbourg -	- 96	1 07	1 24	1 37	1 35	1 20	1 93	1 65	1 00	110 00	66 00	102 00	58 00
Luxembourg -	1 00	1 25	1 75	1 50	2 00	1 60	2 00	3 00	1 00	130 00	80 00	100 00	65 00
Namur - -	1 40	1 55	1 91	1 91	1 84	1 95	2 21	1 89	1 39	262 50	164 05	223 30	131 80
Prix moyen pour tout le Royaume -	1 13	1 26	1 68	1 68	1 59	1 76	2 16	1 81	1 25	169 75	107 62	132 67	84 86

Belgium.

Report from *J. C. Symons*, Esq.

RENSEIGNEMENS sur les Ouvriers dans l'Etablissement de M. *Cockerel*, à Seraing, près de Liége.

Dans cet établissement on fabrique des machines de toute espèce ; il renferme aussi une exploitation de houille, qui alimente ses hauts fourneaux. Chaque haut fourneau est dirigé par un chimiste, un chauffeur, et douze femmes, qui le chargent. Cet établissement est fondé sur le même plan que celui de Liége dit aux Jésuites, dont je vais vous donner les détails. Il s'y trouve aussi beaucoup de dessinateurs, qui ont de 1,500*f.* à 2,000*f.* ; le mouleur en terre et en sable gagne 2*f.* à 7*f.* ; les fondeurs et les chauffeurs savent combien ils ont par 100 kilog.

Cet établissement contient 3,000 ouvriers de toute espèce : il s'y trouve trois hauts fourneaux, dont deux sont maintenant en activité, et le troisième le sera sous peu ; il s'y trouve aussi une houillère, qui communique par des galeries souterraines avec deux autres, qui sont hors de l'établissement, et dont les produits servent à alimenter ces hauts fourneaux, 24 fours à coke, et 12 au charbon de bois.

On fabrique d'abord du fer de toute espèce ; il y a trois jeux à laminoir ; 40 ouvriers sont employés à cette fabrication : le maître ouvrier est un Anglais, qui a un appointement fixe, et tant par 100 kilog, ainsi que les ouvriers, qui ont 3*f.* à 4*f.* par jour : tout le fer qu'on fabrique est employé dans l'établissement.

Il s'y trouve une raffinerie et une fonderie de cuivre ; deux fondeurs, qui gagnent 5*f.* à 6*f.*, et plusieurs assistants.

Il s'y trouve une clouterie pour l'usage de l'établissement ; on y emploie 200 ouvriers, dont la plupart sont des jeunes gens de 10 à 16 ans, payés par 1,000 kilog, et gagnent 3*f.* à 4*f.*, et sont responsables des pertes.

La fabrication de chaudières est très considérable ; 500 à 600 ouvriers y sont employés ; le travail y étant très pénible, ils gagnent 4*f.* à 5*f.* par jour, et la plupart des ouvriers deviennent sourds.

Il s'y trouve 2 gros makas et 3 petits : les makistes gagnent 7*f.* à 8*f.* par jour ; leurs manœuvres ont aussi une plus forte journée, l'ouvrage étant plus pénible. Il y a encore plusieurs fourneaux à rechauffer le fer.

Il s'y trouve 23 ateliers de constructions.

Il y a à-peu-près 60 menuisiers modelistes, qui gagnent 205 *f.* à 240*f.* plus des bénéfices. Les charpentiers et les charrons ont à-peu-près la même journée.

Cinq cents tourneurs en bois, en cuivre et en fer, y sont employés, et y gagnent 2*f.* à 3*f.*, et les plus anciens 7*f.* ; il s'y trouve 400 ajusteurs et limeurs, qui gagnent 2*f.*, 2 ½*f.* à 3*f.*, et partagent au bout de trois mois un bénéfice de 70*fl.* p. 6, selon la besogne qu'ils ont faite.

Il s'y trouve 3 machines à aplanir ou à rabotter le fer, dirigées par un seul homme.

Les maîtres ouvriers ont des gages fixes plus des bénéfices, un surveillant à 50*f.* à 60*f.* par mois.

Il s'y trouve un atelier pour la construction des locomotives : il y a en construction 82 locomotives pour la Russie, pour la Prusse, et pour la Belgique ; on en construit une en 10 jours.

L'atelier d'épreuve est composé des plus anciens et meilleurs ouvriers, qui gagnent 4*f.* à 5 *f.* par jour.

Il y a deux payeurs dans l'établissement.

Les manœuvres gagnent 25 *sous* (ou 1 ½*f.*) à 32 *sous* (ou 2*f.*) ; il y en a un pour 3 ou 4 ouvriers.

Il s'y trouve 2 maîtres selliers, pour le raccmmodage des courroies, 2 maîtres cordeliers, des maisons pour le raccmmodage des fours, etc. : les personnes qui y sont employées ont de 2*f.* à 3*f.* : en un mot, tous les métiers s'y trouvent réunis.

On y construit une fabrique de laines, etc.

On y a aussi établi une espèce d'haras, où il y a une écurie, qui peut contenir une 40 aine de chevaux, auquel est attaché un maréchal ferrant Anglais, qui a 5*f.* par jour. Il ne se trouve plus dans l'établissement que 7 à 8 Anglais, qui sont des chefs, et qui gagnent 10*f.*, 12*f.* et 15*f.* par jour.

Ce bel établissement est éclairé au gaz ; il a son gazomètre et ses trois sorties.

Presque tous les ouvriers logent dans le village, ou dans les environs.

Il s'y trouve plusieurs fonderies en fonte de fer : les maîtres fondeurs son payés par 100 kilog. ; des mouleurs en terre et en sable : oui gagnent de 2*f.* à 4*f.*, nous

ne

ne connaissons pas le nombre des ouvriers employés à la houillère, ainsi que le nombre de manœuvres ; et les fonderies contiennent 20 fourneaux à reverbères.

Renseignements sur les Ouvriers de Liege

Quel est le prix de la journée en hiver et en été ?

Le prix de la journée d'été et d'hiver est le même ; il varie de 1 *f.* à 3 *f.* pour les ouvriers ordinaires, selon leur âge, leur force, leur activité, et surtout leur adresse dans leur état.

Pour les ouvriers qui ont dans leur partie un talent extraordinaire, il reçoivent de 3 *f.* à 5 *f.*, et même jusqu'à 10 *f.*

Dans cette catégorie sont les mécaniciens, menuisiers, constructeurs de machines, maîtres fondeurs, graveurs, ciseleurs, etc.

La durée des heures de travail ?

Elle est ordinairement de 6 à 8 heures comptant pour $\frac{1}{4}$.
„ „ $8\frac{1}{2}$ à 4 „ „
„ „ $4\frac{1}{2}$ à 7 „ „
Ensemble 11 heures. Quelques ateliers ne travaillent que 10 heures, d'autres 12 : à Verviers quelques fabriques de drap font jusqu'à 13 heures, mais les heures que nous venons d'indiquer sont les plus habituelles.

Si l'on emploie les femmes et les enfans, et dans quelle proportion ?

Les fabriques de draps, de coton, de laines, emploient presque exclusivement des femmes. Quelques clouteries mécaniques ont autant de femmes que d'hommes. Les fonderies, usines, ateliers de machines, n'emploient que des hommes. Dans les houillères les hommes travaillent au fond et les femmes au jour.

Les enfans font tout le travail qui n'exige ni force ni adresse : c'est ordinairement vers l'âge de 12 ans qu'ils entrent dans les ateliers ; ils reçoivent alors 2 *f.* à 3 *f.* par semaine.

Quelle est la nourriture des ouvriers ?

Du pain et du café pour les plus pauvres ; quelques uns, cependant, se nourrissent de pommes de terre.

S'ils habitent la ville ou la campagne ?

Ils se logent le plus près possible de leurs ateliers, et lorsqu'ils changent, ils changent aussi de demeure.

S'ils forment une corporation ?

Non ; ils ont même peu de communication ensemble ; chacun vit pour soi, excepté les portefaix, les chargeurs et déchargeurs de voitures.

Le prix de la viande, bière, eau de vie ?

Viande - - -	30 à 60 centimes	la livre, ou $\frac{1}{2}$ kolog.
Bière - - - -	12 „	le litre.
Genièvre - - - -	50 „	le litre.

Taxes Municipales.

Tarif.

		f.	*c.*
Vins de toute espèce - - - - -	l'hectolitre	10	50
Rhum, eaux-de-vie de-vin, de-grains, et autres distillées hors du Royaume, à 50 degrés Gay Lussac - -	„	17	–
Eaux-de-vie de-vin, etc., distillées dans le Royaume à 50 degrés - - - - - - - - - -	„	6	–
Eaux-de-vie de-vin, ect. distillées dans la commune (de cuve matière)		–	20
Liqueurs et eaux spiritueuses - - „ -	„ -	30	–
Vinaigre concentré - - - - „ -	„ -	30	–
„ de vin - - - - „ -	„ -	12	–
Vinaigre de bois et vinaigre artificiel - „ -	„ -	6	–
Bière et vinaigre de l'intérieur - - „ -	„ -	2	50

Belgium.

Report from *J. C Symons*, Esq.

		f.	*c.*
Bière et vinaigre de bière de l'extérieur - -	l'hectolitre	2	–
Huile d'olive - - - - - - - - - - -		13	–
„ Golza - - - - - - - - - - -		6	–

2me Catégorie.

Bœufs, agneaux, et cochons de lait - - -	kilog. sur pied	–	5
Vaches, bouvillons et veaux - - - -	„	–	3 ½
Taureaux, genisses et moutons - - - -	„	–	3
Porcs - - - - - - - - -	„	–	4
Mornes en tonnes et anchois - - - -	l'hectolitre	7	–
Harengs en tonnes - - - - - -	„	3	–
Stockfiches et harengs saurs - - - -	les 100 kilog.	4	–
Tabac en feuilles, et côtes en tiges - - -	„	–	60
Tabac fabriqué de l'extérieur - - - -	„	1	–
Beurre - - - - - - - - -	„	5	–
Fromages indigènes - - - - - - - - -		3	–
Viandes de bœuf, vache, taureau, bouvillon, porc et gennisse, le kil.		–	10
Toutes les autres viandes non désignées - - - -	„	–	08
Œufs - - - - - - - - - -	le 100	–	04

Ouvriers : Mineurs des Exploitations des Environs de Liege.

Rive Gauche de la Mense.

Ouvriers dans l'Intérieur de la Mine.

Le maître ouvrier touche un salaire fixe, qui est de 12 à 18 cents francs ; cela dépend de la grandeur de l'exploitation.

		f.	*c.*
Les sous maîtres ouvriers - - - -	par jour	2	45
Les surveillantes - - - - - -	„	2	30
Les ouvriers ordinaires - - - - -	„	2	25
„ 2e classe - - - - -	„	2	10
Les jeunes gens de 15 à 18 ans - - -	„	1	90
„ „ 12 ans - - - -	„	1	30
„ „ moins forts - - -	„	–	70

L'âge d'admission est 10 ans.

Tous ces ouvriers travaillent à la tâche, qui n'est ordinairement que de six heures.

La nourriture habituelle est la viande de porc, proprement dit lard, dont le prix est de 80 *c.* le ½ kilog., les pommes de terre, les 50 kilog. 2 *f.* 50 *c.* pour boisson, le café et le genièvre.

Ouvriers à la Surface.

	f. *c.*	*f.* *c.*	
Les maréchaux - -	2 50		Toute cette classe travaille—
Les charpentiers -	2 –		L'hiver - - - ¾ de jour.
Les femmes - -	1 –	à 1 10	Les printems et l'automne 1¼ „
Les jeunes filles - -	– 85		L'été - - - - 1¾ „
Les enfans - -	– 50	à – 60	

Ils habitent presque tous soit le faubourg, ou la campagne.

Establissement de Cockerill, dit aux Jesuites

En ville, alimentant à-peu-près 600 ouvriers, qui habitent la plupart la ville et le faubourg.

L'établissement est divisé en brigades, ou boutiques.

Un chef de brigade a un appointement de 350 *f.* à 360 *f.* par an de plus des bénéfices qui nous sont inconnus.

Brigades d'Ajusteurs.

Un ajusteur gagne de 1 *f.* 80 *c.* à 3 *f.* ; une brigade de 25 hommes travaille à la tâche, et fait au-delà de leurs journées un bénéfice qui monte au bout de six semaines

semaines à environ 600*f.* bénéfice, qui est partagé entre tous les ouvriers de cette brigade proportionnellement au nombre de leurs journées.

Brigades de Menuisiers faiseurs de Modèles.

L'ouvrier de cette brigade gagne 2*f.* 5*c.* à 2*f.* 40*c.*; une brigade de menuisiers de 40 hommes fait un bénéfice, qui monte au bout de six semaines à environ 1,400*f.*, qu'on partage entre les ouvriers de cette brigade.

Brigades de Tourneurs en Bois et en Fer.

L'ouvrier de cette brigade gagne par jour de 2*f.* à 3*f.*; en outre une brigade de 120 hommes fait un bénéfice au bout de six semaines, qui monte à 30*f.* ou 35*f.* pour chaque ouvrier.

Les forgerons gagnent de 2*f.* 40*c.* à 3*f.* 50*c.*
Les frappeurs ,, de 1*f.* 75*c.* à 1*f.* 80*c.*

Il y a des monteurs de machines qui vont à l'étranger, et qui gagnent de 8*f.* à 14*f.*, selon le pays où ils vont; et lorsqu'ils sont envoyés en Russie, l'établissement leur fournet des vêtements convenables au pays.

La filature du Quai St. Leonard se compose d'hommes, de femmes et d'enfans qui y sont admis à l'âge de 8 ans ; il n'y a qu'un seul homme par atelier: le personnel de cet établissement monte de 3*c.* à 4*c.* Cet établissement, qui appartenait à Cockerill, vient d'être vendu à la Banque de Belgique, pour une somme de 2,500,000.

L'établissement de la Porte St. Léonard, sous la direction de Regnier Poncelet, se compose de 250 à 300 hommes : il y a des mouleurs en terre et en sable, des fondeurs, des ajusteurs et des menuisiers : les mouleurs gagnent de 4*f.* à 5*f.*, les fondeurs en fer gagnent de 2*f.* à 6*f.*, et ceux en cuivre de 3*f.* à 5*f.*

Fonderie Royale de Canons de Liége.

	f.	
Le maître fondeur a - - - - - -	3,809	per an.
Le sous maître - - - - - - -	1,500	,,
Un maître forgeron, et surveillant des ajusteurs	2,000	,,
Un sous maître - - - - - -	1,500	,,
Un maître menuisier et modeliste - -	1,500	,,
Un sous maître - - - - - -	1,100	,,
Un maître tourneur - - - - -	1,500	,,

Un mouleur gagne 3*f.* 20*c.* par jour à 1,80,150, un menuisier 2*f.* à 1,30, un forgeron 3*f.* 50*c.*, un foreur 2*f.* à 1*f.* 50*c.*, un frappeur 1*f.* 50*c.*, un manœuvre 1*f.* 20*c.*

Fabrique de Zinc, appartenant à la Société Mosselmans.

Cette fabrique ne se compose que de vauriens, qui sont rejettés des autres établissemens; cette industrie produit plus de 300 pour % de bénéfice, quoique la matière première coûte plus de transport qu'elle ne coûte sur les lieux.

Mecaniciens à Gand.

Renseignemens sur les Ouvriers.

Les ouvriers travaillent pendant 12 heures.
Le prix de la journée est de 2*f.*, 2 ½*f.* à 3*f.* par jour.
Les ouvriers se nourrissent de pommes de terre, de pain mêlé de seigle; quelquefois un morceau de viande, avec des légumes ; ils prennent beaucoup de café, de chicorée au lait, et un verre de genièvre à l'occasion.

Maçons.

Les ouvriers sont de l'âge de 18, 20, 25, 30, 40, jusqu'à 60 ans, aussi long temps qu'ils sont en état de mériter leur journée.
Ils se rendent à l'ouvrage à l'heure annoncée par la cloche.

	f.	*c.*
Une journée de 8 heures est de - - - -	1	–
,, 10 ,, - - - - - -	1	5
,, 12 ,, - - - - - -	1	10

Les manœuvres, ou aide maçons, gagnent 17½ *sols* courant par jour.

Belgium.

Report from *J. C. Symons*, Esq.

Ebenistes.

La journée se paie 3*f.*
Les apprentifs 5 *sous* par jour.

Charpentiers.

Les ouvriers se rendent à leur ouvrage à l'heure annoncée par la cloche de la ville:—

	f.	*c.*
Une journée est comptée pour - - 8 heures, à - -	1	—
Une journée et quart pour - - 10 „ - -	1	5
Une journée et demie pour - - 12 „ - -	1	10

Les ouvriers sont de l'âge de 20, 25, 40, 50 ans, même quelques uns jusqu'à 70 ans, aussi long temps qu'ils sont capable de travailler.

ETABLISSEMENT du PHENIX.

On y emploie de 300 à 400 ouvriers, qui gagnent de 1*f.* à 10*f.* par jour: il s'y trouve des Gantois, Anglais, Français, Allemands, de l'âge énoncé ci-dessus. Ils habitent pour la plupart les faubourgs. Il semble qu'on n'aime pas à donner des détails circonstanciés sur l'intérieur du susdit établissement.

Quant à la nourritures des ouvriers en général, ils mangent beaucoup de pommes de terre, des légumes, de la viande; ils prennent du café de chicorée au lait, et le Dimanche un litre d'Uytset dans les cabarets des faubourgs de la vlile.

LETTRE de M. SERAPHIN FORTIN, à BRUXELLES.

Teinturerie et Filature de Coton.

Voici les renseignemens que vous m'avez demandés: si j'ai omis quelque chose, veuillez bien me le rappeller, je ferai de mon mieux pour vous satisfaire.

Mes ouvriers teinturiers gagnent 1*f.* 80*c.* à 2*f.* 20*c.* par jour de 12 heures de travail; j'ai beaucoup de jeunes gens de 14 à 18 ans qui ne gagnent que 1*f.* 10*c.* à 1*f.* 60*c.*, des enfans de 8 à 12 ans qui ne gagnent que 60 à 90 centimes.

Sur quarante de ces ouvriers et enfans—

	f.	*c.*	*f.*	*c.*
J'en paye - - - - -	$\frac{1}{8}$ à 2	20		
	$\frac{3}{8}$ à 1	80		
	$\frac{1}{8}$ à 1	60		
	$\frac{1}{3}$ à 1	30	à 1	40
	$\frac{1}{8}$ à 1	—	à 1	20
	$\frac{1}{8}$ à —	60	à —	90

Dans ma teinturerie je n'employe aucune fille ni femme.

Chez moi les $\frac{3}{4}$ de mes ouvriers et enfans sont de la campagne; dans les autres teintureries c'est à-peu-près la même chose.

Les $\frac{3}{4}$ se nourrissent assez mal avec des pommes de terre- Depuis que je suis en ville, mes ouvriers se nourrissent mieux; je les vois assez souvent avec un morçeau de viande de porc, du pain et du fromage. Ils font chez moi du cafée, chicorée très faible deux fois par jour. Leur défaut est de boire trop de bière le Dimanche, ce qui les rend malaise; et l'énorme dépense qu'ils font en buvant la bière les Dimanches, leur ôte toute possibilité de se bien nourrir. S'ils voulaient s'abstenir de cet excès de dépense en bière les Dimanches et jours de kermesse, ils pourraient se procurer une meilleure nourriture.

Dans la filature en coton je crois, suivant ce que je vois ici, qu'on occupe autant de filles et femmes que d'hommes, et autant de jeunes gens ou filles de 6 à 12 ans que d'hommes.

J'ai 10 fileurs qui occupent régulièrement 10 jeunes gens ou filles. Je crois que, quand ma filature sera bien organisée, j'occuperai deux jeunes gens ou filles de 6 à 12 ans par homme, si toute fois il n'en faut pas trois.

Ces fileurs gagnent régulièrement 16*f* à 18*f.* par semaine, sur quoi ils doivent payer 2*f.* à 3*f.* à leurs enfans ou filles de 6 à 12 ans.

J'ai des menuisiers, forgerons, tourneurs, ajusteurs, qui gagnent 3*f.* à 4*f.* par jour. Tous ces ouvriers et fileurs, et généralement tout ce qui est occupé dans la filature, ne veulent pas travailler les Lundis après 4 à 5 heures. Les $\frac{3}{4}$ se nourrissent

nourrissent mal et les $\frac{3}{4}$ font, comme tous les ouvriers, trop de dépense en bière le Dimanche, et le Lundi ils sont malaise.

La journée de tous ces ouvriers fileurs, menuisiers, etc. est de 13 heures de travail pour un jour. Ils font en été, comme en hiver, $5\frac{3}{4}$ jours par semaine; s'ils voulaient travailler le Lundi, ils feraient 6 jours.

Quand la demande en coton teint ne ralentit pas, mes ouvriers teinturiers font leurs 6 jours par semaine en hiver comme en été. Pour leur faire gagner le nécessaire, suivant l'occasion, je les réduits à 4 ou 5 jours par semaine, sans rien diminuer de leur salaire de journée. J'en ferai de même avec les fileurs, menuisiers et autres, si les circonstances l'exigent.

Imprimerie de Coton à Gand.

Rensiegnemens sur les Ouvriers.

Les ouvriers sont de l'âge de 20 jusqu'à 58, 60 ans.

En été ils se rendent à l'ouvrage à $5\frac{1}{2}$ heures du matin jusqu'à 7 heures du soir.

Ils travaillent par pièce, et peuvent gagner environ 4*f.* par jour.

Les journées diminuent avec la saison.

En hiver les rivières étant gélés, ils ne savent pas travailler.

Les manœuvres gagnent $17\frac{1}{2}$ *sous* par jour en été de $\frac{5}{4}$, compté suivant la cloche de la ville.

On emploie aussi des apprentifs de 10, 11, et 12 ans, à 5 *sous* par jour.

Blanchisseries de Toile.

Les ouvriers sont de l'âge de 20, 25, 30 jusqu'à 60 ans.

Ils sont à l'ouvrage depuis 4 heures du matin jusqu'à 8 heures du soir, et gagnent un florin par jour en été.

Rafinerie du Sucre.

Le prix de la journée est de 18 à 20 *sols* courant de Brabant. Les ouvriers travaillent depuis 6 heures du matin jusqu'à 8 heures du soir; on n'y emploie ni femmes, ni enfans [la nourriture, *voyez* Phenix]; la plupart des ouvriers habitent la ville, pas de corporation.

Filature.

Les ouvriers gagnent de 2, $2\frac{1}{2}$ à 3*f.* par jour.

Les apprentifs de 12 à 16 ans gagnent de 75*c.* à 1*f.*

Des jeunes filles de 12 à 15 ans gagnent de 75*c.* à 1*f.*

La viande se paie $5\frac{1}{2}$ *sols* courant de Brabant la livre, poids de Gand.

La bière $11\frac{1}{2}$ à 12 *fl.* courant le tonne, d'environ 70 lots, mesure de Gand.

L'eau de vie se paye 15 *sols* courant de Brabant le pot, mesure de Gand.

Copie d'une Lettre de M. A. Tonnelier, à Tournay.

Filature de Fil.

J'ai l'honneur de repondre à votre lettre du 15 c^{t}, pour satisfaire à la demande que vous fait M. Vandermaclen.

1°. Quel est le prix de la journée en été et en hiver?

Il est le même pour les deux saisons, parce qu'il se paie par douze heures de travail à raison d'un *f.* 35 *c.* pour un homme fait.

2°. La durée des heures de travail?

En été depuis six heures jusqu'à huit heures.

En hiver depuis le jour jusqu'à huit heures et demie, quelque fois neuf heures.

3°. Si l'on emploie des femmes et enfans, et dans quelle proportion, avec les hommes?

Les femmes n'ont pas encore été employées dans nos ateliers; cependant il est probable qu'elles y seront introduites, parceque les bras se manquent; les enfans font le quart du nombre de nos ouvriers.

5°. Quelle est la nourriture habituelle des ouvriers?

Ils se nourrissent ordinairement d'un bon pain, avec de la soupe, et des pommes de terre, rarement ils peuvent manger de la viande.

Belgium.

Report from *J. C. Symons*, Esq.

6°. S'ils habitent la ville ou la campagne ?

Ils habitent tous la ville.

Si quelques autres renseignemens peuvent vous être nécessaires, veuillez me les demander, je m'empresserai de vous les donner.

Copie d'une Lettre, de M. Simonon de Tournay.

J'ai reçu successivement les deux lettres que vous m'avez adressées les 11 et 24 Décembre. J'y aurais répondu plus-tôt si elles n'avaient éxigé de ma part quelques démarches que je me suis empressé de faire, mais qui ne m'ont encore procuré que des renseignemens imparfaits, qui j'ai l'honneur de vous transmettre, me réservant toutefois de les compléter aussitôt qu'il me sera possible. Pour satisfaire à la lettre du 11, voici les renseignemens que j'ai obtenus de—

MM. Tonnelier, pour la filature de Fil.
,, Ch. B., pour la manufacture de Tapis.
,, Getelet, pour la Bonneterie.

Ceux-ci n'étant pas complets, j'en ai demandés à un autre fabricant. Je n'ai pu encore les obtenir.

Pour la tisseranderie, la résponse verbale qui m'a été donnée, est, que cette branche est exploiée par des campagnards, qui éxécutent le travail chez eux, et viennent le rapporter au maître pièce à pièce: il faut qu'un ouvrier travaille nuit et jour pour gagner 1 *f.* 25 *c.* ou 1 *f.* 50 *c.* suivant son habilité; communément il gagne 1 *f.* 25 *c.* à 1 *f.* 50 *c.*: six enfans qui sont employés à mettre le fil sur la navette (*faire des épuelles*) gagnent 30 *c.*, 40 *c.* or 50 *c.* par jour.

Pour les autres genres de fabrication, les ouvriers habitent généralement la ville. Ordinairement chaque fabrique un peu importante a une caisse de secours pour ses ouvriers, qui s'alimente aux moyens de legères rétributions mensuelles ou hebdomadaires, fournies par l'ouvrier lui-même: ou cas de maladie, il reçoit une rétribution prise sur les fondes de ces caisses.

La viande se paie par demi kilogramme à *c.*; la bière se vend 20 *c.* à 22 *c.* le litre; l'eau de vie, 1 *f.* 28 *c.* le litre; le genièvre 96 *c.* le litre; à prendre en détail par mésure dite de *demi-potée* $\frac{1}{16}$ de litre: les droits d'octroi, au profit de la ville, sont comme suit:—

Eau de vie indigènes, 19 *f.* – *c.* l'hectolitre.
,, étrangers, 15 *f.* 24 *c.*, ou 36 % de l'accise.
Bière fabriquée en ville, 2 *f.* – *c.*, l'hectolitre.
,, importées - - 2 *f.* 50 *c.*

La viande se paie pour un bœuf ou vache, 12 *f.*, génisse 5 *f.*, veau 2 *f.*, agneau 1 *f.*, porc 6 *f.*, viande depèce, dite à la main, 5 *c.* au kilogramme.

Fabrique de Tapis, Manufacture Royale, le Tournay.

Lettre de M. Carl. Birkenstock.

Je m'empresse de répondre aux questions que vous m'adressez par votre lettre de ce matin.

Les ouvriers gagnent par jour en été et en hiver, l'un dans l'autre, 2 *f.* à 2½ *f.*

Ils travaillent en été deux heures et en hiver dix.

Pour la fabrication de tapis, c'est-à-dire pour le tissage et les tapis genre savonnesse on n'emploie aucune femme; tandis qu'à la filature de laine ce ne sont que des hommes, excepté les peigneurs et les surveillans.

Les enfans entrent à l'âge de 5 ans.

Prix des Journees des Ouvriers à Bruxelles.

Les maçons plafonneurs, peintres en batimens, menuisiers, charpentiers, ardoisiers, gagnent—

	f.	*c.*
Pour une journée ordinaire, ou quartre quarts, de 7½ h. du matin à 4 ou 5 h. de relevée - - - -	1	62
Pour cinq quarts, de 6½ h. du matin à 6 h. du soir -	2	4
Pour six quarts, de 5½ - - ,, - à 7½ - ,, - -	2	50

Le

Le manœuvres ou aides ont,—

	f.	*c.*
Pour quartre quarts	1	8
Pour cinq quarts	1	36
Pour six quarts	1	63

Les manœuvres d'ardoisiers ont 20 *c.* moins que les autres.

Les maçons viennent pour la plupart du pays Wallon; ils se nourrissent de café et de pain de seigle le matin; de tartines, avec un demi litre de bière, à midi; de soupe et de légumes le soir: ils donnent à leur logement 2 *f.* 50 *c.* pour leur lit et leur nourriture, non compris le pain et le laitage, qu'ils fournissent eux-mêmes, et qui leur coutent en sus environ 2 *f.*

	f.	*c.*
Les tailleurs de pierres gagnent pour quartre quarts	1	48
,, ,, ,, cinq	1	72

Mais le maître retient 20 *c.* par jour pour leurs outils, qu'il restaure souvent à ses frais.

Les maréchaux ferrans gagnent	de 2 *f.* à 4 *f.*
Les aides	de 1 *f.* 49 *c.* à 1 *f.* 81 *c.*
Les selliers gagnent	de 1½ *f.* à 3 *f.*
Les forgeurs	7 *f.* dans les grands ateliers.
Les charrons	de 2 *f.* à 2 ½ *f.*
Les aides charrons	1 *f.* 26 *c.* plus la nourriture.

Les charrons et leurs aides travaillent toujours de 5 ½ h. du matin à 7 ½ h. du soir.

	f.	*c.*	*f.*	*c.*
Les peintres de voiture gagnent en hiver	1	81		
,, ,, ,, en été	2	–		
Ceux qui fabriquent les caisses de voiture	2	–	à 2	–
Leurs apprentifs	1	50	à 2	
Les paveurs gagnent	1	81		
Leurs aides	1	50		
Les scieurs de bois à bruler	4	–		
Les scieurs de planches travaillent à pièce, et gagnent	3	–	à 35	
Les ouvriers de l'usine au gaz	2	50		
Les imprimeurs typographes	5	–		
Les compositeurs	3	–		

Les imprimeurs lithographes forment entr'eux une association, sous le titre d'Association Typographique des Secours mutuels.

Les ouvriers qui travaillent au canal à decharger les marchandises diverses à l'aide de la perche, forment une corporation, et gagnent 1 *f.* 70 *c.*

Ceux qui déchargent les pierres avec la grue, forment aussi une corporation, et gagnent un jour parmi l'autre 5 *f.*

	f.	*c.*
Les ouvriers de l'usine au gaz gagnent	2	50
Les bateliers du canal de Charleroi gagnent	2	–

PROVINCE de BRABANT, CANTON de WAVRE.

	c.
Les journaliers gagnoient en 1836, en hiver	72
,, ,, en été	81
,, ,, en 1838, l'hiver	81
,, ,, l'été	99
Les femmes travaillant à la journée, gagnoient en 1836, l'hiver	42
,, ,, ,, l'été	54
,, ,, ,, en 1838, l'hiver	50
,, ,, ,, l'été	63

La durée de la journée est en été de 5 h. matin à 7 ½ soir; en hiver elle est égale à la journée astronomique. Ils se nourrissent de pain de seigle et de café le matin, de soupe et de légumes à dîner, et ils mangent de la viande trois fois la semaine; ils ont en outre des personnes où ils travaillent deux litres de bière.

Belgium.

Report from *J. C. Symons*, Esq.

Les domestiques gagnent 228 *f.* 57 *c.* ou 136 *f.*; ils sont en outre nourris, logés, etc. mais non blanchis. Les servantes ont 72 ½ *f.*, deux tabliers, deux chemises, deux serre-têtes, une paire de souliers; elles ont en outre une gratification de droit; mais cet usage, ainsi que la gratification de 3 *f.* qu'on donne au domestique lorsqu'on vend un cheval, et celle de 64 *c.* lorsqu'on vend une bête à cornes, tombent en désuétude.

Les vergers qui gardent les moutons sont bien payés, parceque ce sont des espèces de docteurs, et qu'ils doivent faire cinq à six ans d'apprentissage. Ils sont nourris, ont 54 *f.*, et en sus trente moutons deviennent sa propriété. Ceux qui n'ont pas de moutons à eux, ont 272 *f.*

	f.	*c.*
Les maçons, charpentiers, menuisiers, gagnent - -	1	81
Les manœuvres - - - - - - - - -	1	50

On ne leur donne pas de pain, mais de la soupe et de la bierre ou du café.

Les maréchaux ferrans gagnent 3 *f.*, et leurs aides 1 *f.* 26 *c.* et la nourriture: dans toutes les saisons ils travaillent de 6 h. du matin à 8 du soir.

Les tailleurs ont 72 *c.*, la nourriture et la lumière: ils travaillent de 6 h. du matin jusqu' à 7 du soir dans toutes les saisons. Les couturières ont 45 *c.* et la nourriture pour la même journée.

Les cordonniers sont à pièce; ils gagnent jour moyen de 1 ½ *f.* à 2 *f.*: ils ont le dîner.

Le prix de la journée des ouvriers employés à détacher la mine est de 2 *f.* 50 *c.* pour dix heures de travail, et 1 *f.* 90 *c.* pour sept heures.

Les ouvriers tailleurs de pierres sont payés au toisé; la journée moyenne revient en été à 2 *f.* et celle d'hiver à 1 *f.* 40 *c.*

La journée des ouvriers terrassiers ou manœuvres, travaillant aux carrières et aux champs, se paye 1 *f.* 30 *c.* pour dix heures de travail, et 1 *f.* pour sept heures. Ces prix sont basés non compris la nourriture, qu'on ne leur donne jamais.

Leur nourriture ordinaire consiste en pain, moitié seigle, moitié froment, beaucoup de soupe; quand à la viande la plupart n'en mangent que deux ou trois fois la semaine; leur boisson principale est la bière brune. Ils ne forment point de corporation entr'eux.

[Copie d'une lettre de M. *Delalieux à Feluy*, près *Soignées*.]

Renseignemens sur les Classes Ouvriers.

Rochefort et les Ardennes.

Les ouvriers sont heureux à Rochefort; ils gagnent pendant la saison d'hiver jusqu'au 1er Mars, 80 *c.*; depuis le 1er Mars jusqu'au 1er Mai, 1 *f.* 20 *c.*; et depuis le 1er Mai jusqu'à la récolte, 1 *f.* 50 *c.* Les femmes gagnent 50 *c.*, plus la nourriture, qui est évaluée à 50 *c.* La journée de travail est toujours égale au jour astronomique. Les ouvriers se nourrissent de pain, de légumes, et ils mangent 2 ou 4 fois par semaine de la viande de cochon et de veau.

Les maçons y gagnent 1 *f.* 20 *c.*, ou 2 *f.* avec nourriture.

Les charpentiers y gagnent 2 *f.*

Les ouvriers ne sont pas si heureux dans les Ardennes qu'à Rochefort; ils gagnent en hiver 75 *c.*, en été 1 *f.* Les femmes ont 40 *c.* ils; se nourrissent de pain, d'avoine, de pommes de terre, et mangent beaucoup de viande.

Renseignemens sur les Ouvriers.

Fabriques de Bonneterie à Tournay.

1°. Quant au salaire:—On emploie dans la bonneterie deux espèces d'ouvriers, ceux à journées et ceux à l'œuvre; les premiers, qui sont, pour ainsi dire, les hommes de peine de la fabrique, gagnent généralment de 1 *f.* à 1 *f.* 25 *c.* par jour; les teinturiers de 1 *f.* 50 *c.* à 2 *f.*: ceux à l'œuvre sont les peigneurs et les bonnetiers; les premiers gagnent moyennement de 8 *f.* à 11 *f.* par semaine, et les derniers de 4 *f.* à 10 *f.*, et quelquefois jusqu'à 12 *f.*

2°. La journée de travail dans la saison d'hiver commence à 7 heures et finit à 8 heures; en été de 6 ½ à 8 heures; durant toute l'année le repos de midi dure 1 ½ heure.

3° Les

3°. Les femmes sont employés comme couturières, remailleuses ; leur salaire journalier est de 65*c.* à 1 *f.* La proportion numérique des hommes et des femmes employés est d'environ 7 à 1.

4°. Les enfans des deux sexes sont employés pour dévideurs et couseurs de l'âge de 10 ans.

5°. Nourriture ordinaire du pain, des pommes de terre, et de la soupe, une ou deux fois par semaine de la viande ; boisson, de l'eau dans le ménage, de la bière et du genièvre au cabaret aux jours de fête.

6°. Les ouvriers en bonneterie habitent généralement la ville, à l'exception des tricoteuses à domicile que fournissent les communes des environs : la salaire quotidien d'une bonne tricoteuse est d'environ 30*c.* à 40*c.*

Copie d'une Letttre de M. Getelet Derveau, à Tournay.

Fabrique de Bonneterie.

Je ne puis satisfaire à la demande que vous me faites par la lettre que vous avez bien voulu m'addresser avant hier.

Mon commerce ne demandant l'emploi que de femmes et fillettes pour le tricotage, et la nombre que j'occupe des ces deux catégories, peut s'elever à 200 environ ; la femme peut gagner 50*c.* à 70*c.* par jour, et la fillette dans la proportion des deux tièrs.

DAY-LABOURERS WAGES.

Salaire des Ouvriers dans les Campagnes.

Hainaut.

	f.	*c.*
Blandain :—		
hommes - avec nourriture	–	76
„ - sans „	1	52
femmes - avec „	–	38
„ - sans „	–	76
Cordes :—		
hommes - avec „	–	91
„ - sans „	–	46
femmes - avec „	–	71
„ - sans „	–	35
Escunuffles :—		
hommes - avec „	1	63
„ - sans „	–	48
femmes - avec „	–	31
„ - sans „	–	63
Burinnes :—		
hommes - avec nourriture	–	52
femmes - - id. -	–	72
femme pendant la moisson - id. -	1	5
Biévène :—		
hommes - avec nourriture	–	46
femmes - sans „	–	63
Couitten :—		
hommes - - - -	1	58
femmes - - - -	–	84
Quaregnon :—		
hommes - - - -	1	1
femmes - - - -	–	59

Salaire des Journaliers dans les Campagnes.

Province de Liège.

	f.	*c.*
Hollogne aux Pierres :—		
hommes - avec nourriture	1	5
femmes - id. - - -	–	59
Andrimont :—		
hommes - avec nourriture	1	18
femmes - id. - - -	–	88
Aubet :—		
hommes - - - - -	1	5
femmes - - - - -	–	52
Sprimont :—		
hommes - - - -	1	26
femmes - - - -	–	84
Chenée :—		
hommes - - - -	1	26
femmes - - -	–	84
Sart :—		
hommes - - - -	1	18
femmes - - - -	–	97

Belgium.

Report from *J. C. Symons*, Esq.

Salaire des Journaliers dans les Campagnes.

Limbourg.

	c.
Broeckhuysen :—	
hommes - en été - -	46
,, - en hiver - -	33
femmes - en été - -	23
,, - en hiver - -	16
Odilienberg :—	
hommes - en été - -	84
,, - en hiver - -	63
femmes - en été - -	84
,, - en hiver - -	63
Virsbeck :—	
hommes - - - -	84
femmes - - - -	63
Gennep :—	
hommes - - - -	97
femmes - - - -	63
Kerkruede :—	
hommes - - - -	48
femmes - - - -	31
Looz :—	
hommes - - - -	33
femmes - - - -	29
Beringen :—	
hommes - - - -	99
femmes - - - -	48

Salaire des Journaliers dans les Campagnes.

Province de Namur.

		f.	c.
Asche en Refait -	hommes -	–	52
	femmes -	–	31
Andenne - -	hommes -	1	20
	femmes -	–	84
Bouge - -	hommes -	1	26
	femmes -	–	84
Barvaux - -	hommes -	–	84
	femmes -	–	59
Hemptinne - -	hommes	1	5
	femmes -	–	74
Villers sur-Lesse -	hommes -	1	48
	femmes -	–	84
Profonderille -	hommes -	1	5
	femmes -	–	35
Walcourt - -	hommes -	1	5
	femmes -	–	74
Gourdinne - -	hommes -	1	26
	femmes -	–	63

Salaire des Journaliers dans les Campagnes.

Province de Luxembourg.

		f.	c.
Viert Salm -	hommes -	–	99
	femmes -	–	84
Marche - -	hommes -	–	99
	femmes -	–	59
Nanogn - -	hommes -	–	99
	femmes -	–	59
Bouillon - -	hommes -	–	95
	femmes -	–	74
Verton - -	hommes -	–	99
	femmes -	–	70
Remish - -	hommes -	1	0
	femmes -	–	74
Echternuch -	hommes -	1	3
	femmes -	–	84
Veurden - -	hommes -	1	5
	femmes -	–	63
Houffalize - -	hommes -	–	99
	femmes -	–	74

Anvers.

La journée des ouvriers du port est de 1 *f.* 81 *c.*, 2 *f.*, 2 *f.* 50 *c.*, 3 *f.* 50 *c.*

Les ouvriers qui d'échargent le bois y forment une corporation.

,, ,, ,, la houille - - id.

,, ,, ,, le merchandises diverses - id.

Salaire des Journaliers dans les Campagnes.

Province de Brabant.

	f.	c.
Anderlecht :—		
hommes	–	80
femmes	–	63
Guesbeck :—		
hommes	–	63
femmes	–	63
Vienna Genappe :—		
hommes	–	63
femmes	–	31
Jart-dame Areline :—		
hommes	–	63
femmes	–	31
Geet-betz :—		
hommes	–	84
femmes	–	59
Lichen :—		
hommes	–	84
femmes	–	42
Wespeluer :—		
hommes - sans nourriture	–	91
femmes - ,,	–	80
Dreyhem :—		
hommes - ,,	–	82
femmes - ,,	–	63

Salaire des Journaliers dans les Campagnes.

Province de la Flandre Occidentale.

	f.	c.
Blanckenberg :—		
hommes	–	99
femmes	–	74
Damme :—		
hommes	1	26
femmes	–	84
Inglemunster :—		
hommes	1	7
femmes	–	91
Vire St. Eloy :—		
hommes	1	8
femmes	–	91
Haerlebeke :—		
hommes	–	63
femmes	–	31
Comines :—		
hommes	1	5
femmes	–	52
Espierres :—		
hommes avec nourriture	–	59
femmes - " -	–	33

Salaire des Journaliers dans les Campagnes.

Province de Flandre Orientale.

		f.	c.
Beveren	hommes en été	1	26
	,, en hiver	–	25
	femmes en été	–	71
	,, en hiver	–	55
Doet	hommes	1	48
	femmes	–	63
Euloo	hommes	1	26
	femmes	–	71
Nevele	hommes	1	10
	femmes	–	80
Renaix	hommes	1	5
	femmes	–	74
Grammom	hommes	1	26
	femmes	–	84
Sottegem	hommes	1	10
	femmes	–	84

Salaire des Journaliers dans les Campagnes.

Province d'Anvers.

	f.	c.
Boom :—		
hommes avec nourriture	1	26
,, sans ,,	–	74
femmes avec ,,	–	95
,, sans ,,	–	52
Duffel :—		
hommes avec nourriture	–	63
femmes - id.	–	31
Westerloo :—		
hommes	–	80
femmes	–	44
Gheel :—		
hommes	–	63
femmes	–	46
Turnhout :—		
hommes en été	1	26
,, en hiver	–	91
femmes été et hiver	–	91
Deurne :—		
hommes avec nourriture	–	63
femmes - id.	–	31
Lérenthals :—		
hommes	–	99
femmes	–	76

PRIX DU BLÉ.

FLANDRE OCCIDENTALE.	Janvier.	Fevrier.	Mars.	Avril.	Mai.	Juin.	Juillet.	Août.	Septembre.	Octobre.	Novembre.	Décembre.
	fl. c.	fl. c.	fl. c.	fl. c.	fl. c.	fl. c.	fl. c.	fl. c.	fl. c.	fl. c.	fl. c.	fl. c.
1832:												
Froment - -	–	–	–	–	–	–	11 35	9 39½	9 23¼	8 67½	8 15	
Seigle - -	–	–	–	–	–	–	7 06	5 42½	5 80½	5 78	5 51½	
Orge - -	–	–	–	–	–	–	6 31	–	5 39	5 25	7 76	
Avoine - -	–	–	–	–	–	–	3 85	3 89½	3 10	4 23½	3 70	
1833:												
Froment - -	–	–	14 77	14 58	14 60	15 58	15 28	14 54	14 07	13 72	13 58	
Seigle - -	–	–	9 05½	9 28	9 05	9 81	9 34	9 51	9 73	9 64	8 95	
Orge - -	–	–	9 18	9 32	9 12	10 64	10 30	11 41	9 57	8 33	8 65	
Avoine - -	–	–	7 18	6 99	6 57	6 87	7 24	7 2	6 54	6 73	6 67	
1834:												
Froment - -	–	–	–	–	–	12 74	12 62	11 96	13 20	14 63	14 53	15 20
Seigle - -	–	–	–	–	–	8 10	7 86	7 68	8 30	8 86	9 57	9 24
Orge - -	–	–	–	–	–	9 31	7 96	7 98	8 72	8 61	8 63	8 83
Avoine - -	–	–	–	–	–	7 04	7 12	5 91	6 07	6 30	6 62	6 89
1835:												
Froment - -	14 53	14 56	14 24	13 97	14 42	14 46	15 34	14 15	13 72	13 62	13 87	13 35
Seigle - -	9 17	9 49	9 07	8 92	8 93	9 00	9 02	8 16	8 46	8 61	9 16	9 14
Orge - -	8 35	8 24	8 55	8 36	8 63	10 37	10 05	9 72	8 56	8 20	8 44	8 17
Avoine - -	7 09	7 08	7 43	7 72	7 79	7 80	7 88	7 23	6 42	6 41	6 47	6 45
1836:												
Froment - -	13 36	12 89	12 90	13 68	14 97	15 09	14 86	15 39	15 35	15 60	16 78	16 37
Seigle - -	9 06	8 80	8 75	9 16	10 04	10 20	9 55	9 98	9 38	10 07	10 32	10 75
Orge - -	8 39	8 47	8 48	9 41	9 68	10 32	9 71	9 37	9 11	9 89	10 30	10 24
Avoine - -	6 35	6 22	6 25	6 38	6 29	6 12	6 20	6 53	6 13	6 14	6 11	6 48
1837:												
Froment - -	16 05	15 78	15 54	16 02	16 29	16 28	16 27	16 48	16 23	15 80	15 90	15 07
Seigle - -	10 47	10 30	10 22	10 74	10 78	11 35	11 19	10 55	10 19	10 28	9 84	9 72
Orge - -	9 88	10 05	9 63	9 41	9 09	8 97	8 57	8 65	8 63	9 –	8 92	8 50
Avoine - -	8 84	6 41	6 33	6 50	6 51	6 51	7 07	7 51	6 29	6 05	6 21	6 09
1838:												
Froment - -	15 36	16 41	16 61	17 76	19 29							
Seigle - -	9 88	10 47	10 62	11 15	11 48							
Orge - -	8 43	8 91	8 77	9 67	10 56							
Avoine - -	6 23	6 33	6 52	6 89	6 81							

Prix moyen de la Rasière (Hectolitre) = 22 Imperial Gallons. Province de Flandre Occidentale.

BRABANT.												
1832:												
Froment - -	–	–	–	–	–	–	11 56	10 59	10 23	–	9 40	
Seigle - -	–	–	–	–	–	–	6 59	6 60	6 74	–	6 55	
Orge - -	–	–	–	–	–	–	6 53	6 20	6 12	–	6 24	
Avoine - -	–	–	–	–	–	–	4 52	4 21	3 33	–	4 03	
1833:												
Froment - -	–	–	16 37	16 36	14 60	16 52	15 45	16 28	14 86	13 90	14 37	
Seigle - -	–	–	10 16	10 48	9 77	10 6	10 3	10 27	10 21	9 79	9 47	
Orge - -	–	–	11 38	11 62	11 36	11 3	11 1	10 95	10 51	10 39	9 89	
Avoine - -	–	–	8 54	8 –	7 82	7 70	8 40	7 32	7 49	6 43	6 42	
1834:												
Froment - -	–	–	–	–	–	13 81	14 74	16 37	15 37	15 95	15 77	15 89
Seigle - -	–	–	–	–	–	7 01	8 03	8 76	8 66	8 17	9 27	9 37
Orge - -	–	–	–	–	–	9 79	9 82	9 2	9 55	9 30	9 65	9 61
Avoine - -	–	–	–	–	–	6 37	7 16	6 44	6 89	6 77	7 21	6 36
1835:												
Froment - -	15 74	15 53	15 55	16 03	15 70	15 83	16 52	15 78	15 27	15 75	15 18	14 93
Seigle - -	9 23	8 52	8 96	9 19	9 42	9 79	9 67	8 59	8 53	8 90	9 01	9 04
Orge - -	9 39	9 18	9 36	9 55	9 83	10 22	10 60	10 38	9 05	9 55	9 36	9 50
Avoine - -	6 63	6 57	6 83	7 24	7 48	7 73	7 99	6 99	5 89	6 21	5 97	5 97

PRIX DU BLÉ—*continued.*

BRABANT—*continued.*	Janvier.	Fevrier.	Mars.	Avril.	Mai.	Juin.	Juillet.	Août.	Septembre.	Octobre.	Novembre.	Décembre.
	fl. c.	fl. c.	fl. c.	fl. c.	fl. c.	fl. c.	fl. c.	fl. c.	fl. c.	fl. c.	fl. c.	fl. c.
1836:												
Froment - -	14 85	14 14	14 59	15 56	16 90	17 02	17 76	17 48	17 02	17 04	17 60	17 53
Seigle - -	9 08	8 69	8 52	9 43	11 61	11 63	11 06	10 60	10 74	11 37	11 72	10 94
Orge - -	9 50	9 61	9 55	9 87	11 12	11 36	10 67	9 91	9 64	9 65	9 90	10 31
Avoine - -	5 97	5 85	5 98	6 18	6 43	6 51	6 39	6 13	5 64	6 01	6 27	6 13
1837:												
Froment - -	16 85	16 40	16 65	17 26	16 96	16 97	17 14	17 50	17 08	16 85	16 70	16 35
Seigle - -	11 01	10 80	10 68	11 13	11 78	11 61	11 24	10 94	10 64	11 44	10 88	10 12
Orge - -	10 43	10 07	10 57	10 45	10 58	10 83	10 20	9 14	9 08	9 72	10 21	9 99
Avoine - -	8 49	5 95	6 03	6 17	6 79	6 99	7 46	7 74	6 25	6 06	6 50	6 47
1838:												
Froment - -	16 50	16 80	16 93	18 08	19 76							
Seigle - -	10 56	11 02	10 79	11 38	11 82							
Orge - -	9 87	6 92	10 87	11 30	12 12							
Avoine - -	6 70	10 25	7 06	8 12	8 03							

Prix moyen de la Rasière (Hectolitre.) Province du Brabant.

NAMUR.												
1832:												
Froment - -	–	–	–	–	–	–	11 35	9 84	9 49	–	8 35	
Seigle - -	–	–	–	–	–	–	6 67	5 58	6 02	–	5 78	
Orge.												
Avoine - -	–	–	–	–	–	–	3 97	2 93	2 71	–	3 43	
1833:												
Froment - -	–	–	14 69	14 41	12 60	14 27	14 43	13 65	14 48	13 13	12 73	
Seigle - -	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	8 16	9 97			
Orge.												
Avoine - -	–	–	6 56	6 73	6 56	6 29	6 72	5 94	6 09	5 74	4 78	
1834:												
Froment - -	–	–	–	–	–	12 54	14 60	15 60	15 04	15 51	15 13	14 95
Seigle - -	–	–	–	–	–	–	8 30	7 39	7 39	8 57	8 61	8 71
Orge - -	–	–	–	–	–	–	8 45	8 46	8 46	9 06	8 91	
Avoine - -	–	–	–	–	–	5 34	4 83	4 92	5 13	6 04	5 66	5 81
1835:												
Froment - -	15 11	14 72	14 73	5 08	15 31	15 57	16 23	16 04	15 60	15 19	14 66	13 84
Seigle - -	8 52	8 22	8 10	8 19	8 81	8 76	8 71	8 52	8 11	8 37	8 82	8 59
Orge.												
Avoine - -	6 34	5 64	6 04	6 23	7 10	8 00	8 00	6 68	5 47	5 58	6 19	6 12
1836:												
Froment - -	13 75	13 58	13 55	13 88	15 72	16 49	16 17	16 02	16 15	16 32	16 22	16 67
Seigle - -	8 77	8 66	8 65	8 73	10 59	11 64	11 01	9 84	9 54	9 96	10 32	10 67
Orge.												
Avoine - -	6 11	5 81	5 77	6 21	6 15	6 38	6 36	6 28	4 67	5 46	5 63	5 80
1837:												
Froment - -	16 16	15 58	15 73	15 91	16 53	16 45	16 30	16 54	16 34	16 65	16 40	15 71
Seigle - -	10 26	10 17	10 15	9 81	10 69	11 35	10 34	10 31	9 89	10 59	11 17	10 65
Orge.												
Avoine - -	5 47	5 52	5 67	5 95	6 45	6 82	7 36	6 81	6 34	6 67	6 64	6 65
1838:												
Froment - -	15 83	15 92	16 31	17 11	19 46							
Seigle - -	10 74	11 03	10 94	11 14	11 17							
Orge.												
Avoine - -	6 25	6 25	7 14	8 32	8 98							

Prix moyen de la Resière (Hectolitre.) Province de Namur.

IMPORTATIONS ET EXPORTATIONS DU BLÉ.

Années.	Importations.	Exportations.	Importations, Exportations déduites.	Exportations, Importations déduites.
		Froment.		
1831 -	8,553,859	Prohibée.		
1832 -	29,722,355			
1833 -	8,553,859	765,931	7,787,928	
1834 -	2,579,160	1,100,463	1,478,697	
1835 -	2,036,273	449,078	1,587,198	
1836 -	2,767,043	837,605	1,929,438	
1837 -	2,095,159	858,113	1,237,046	
1838, 9 m.	10,898,777*	4,372,466	6,526,311	
		Seigle.		
1831 -	5,518,272	Prohibée.		
1832 -	25,763,553			
1833 -	2,716,793	945,712	1,771,081	
1834 -	439,808	799,101	- - -	359,293
1835 -	80,504	1,900,991	- - -	1,820,487
1836 -	1,183,088	2,307,742	- - -	1,124,654
1837 -	1,958,913	4,032,370	- - -	2,073,457
1838, 9 m.	705,047*	3,952,351	- - -	3,247,304

* Le chiffre des importations des neuf premiers mois de 1838 n'en fait pas connaître le montant exact, par le motif que les grains entrés en entrepôt s'y trouvent compris, tandis qu'il n'y a de véritable importation que par la sortie de l'entrepôt pour être mis en consommation. Sous le même rapport, les tableaux qui accompagnaient le projet de loi contenaient la même erreur, qui a été rectifiée.

Années.	Importations.	Exportations.	Impostations, Exportations déduites.	Exportations, Importations déduites.
		Orge.		
1831 -	848,205	Prohibée.		
1832 -	26,890,566			
1833 -	24,774,819	325,204	24,449,615	
1834 -	15,313,314	393,985	14,919,329	
1835 -	10,809,492	34,360	10,775,132	
1836 -	12,951,794	263,775	12,688,019	
1837 -	16,219,387	324,113	15,895,274	
1838, 9 m.	12,090,755*	1,922,579	10,168,176	
		Pain, Biscuit, Pain d'Epices, Farine de toute espèce, Son, Fécule de Pommes de Terre.		
1831 -	378,142	24,707	353,435	
1832 -	1,083,819	57,273	1,026,582	
1833 -	157,250	73,188	84,062	
1834 -	17,219	217,848	- - -	200,629
1835 -	6,612	117,046	- - -	110,434
1836 -	6,549	814,132	- - -	807,583
1837 -	13,880	2,230,061	- - -	2,306,181
1838, 9 m.	8,440*	1,494,910	- - -	1,486,470
		Avoine.		
1831 -	361,956	Prohibée.		
1832 -	24,011,237			
1833 -	29,032,224	685,695		
1834 -	14,677,598	692,139	13,985,459	
1835 -	18,507,846	205,470	18,302,376	
1836 -	10,343,975	685,290	9,658,684	
1837 -	12,002,675	231,669	11,771,006	
1838, 9 m.	22,624,936*	3,127,756	19,497,180	

1 Hectolitre = 22·009 Imperial Gallons
= 2·751 Bushels.
1 Quarter = 2·907 Hectolitres.

Exportation of Flour.

The soil produces, on an average, more than double the amount of consumption in grain, which exceeds six million hectolitres annually. The rise in price is referable to the large trade carried on in the exportation of flour. There are one or two immense mills at Antwerp and at Brussels for the express purpose of grinding both Belgian and foreign wheat. I made several endeavours to see these mills, but without success. My attention was called to the subject by Sir Hamilton Seymour. A Government Commissioner from Austria, who I heard was engaged in a similar mission to mine, also tried in vain to see the mill at Brussels. It is said to be instituted by the anonymous bank society, of which Messrs. Meus-Meus, Coghan, Benard, &c., are at the head. A Prussian gentleman, who had been more fortunate at Antwerp, told me the mill there was on an immense scale, and the machinery excellent.

Physical Condition of the Poor.

The cottages of the country peasants and artisans are proverbially neat and cleanly, and so I universally found them; but my visits to the poor districts in Brussels presented a very different result. The houses where the poor live are dirty, close, crowded and offensive.

A commission has been formed recently to inquire into the condition of the working classes in Brussels, which entirely confirms my impression; though I was not acquainted with its report till after my return to London. I allude to it for the purpose chiefly of begging leave to direct your attention to the plan proposed by this committee (composed of Messrs. Moeremanns, Spaak and Ducpetiaux) for the effectual remedy of an evil which exists more or less in all large and crowded cities. It is briefly this: for Government, or a company, to build enormous dwelling-houses for the poor, with hospital, library, common fire, kitchen-gardens, baths, schools, &c. attached; the rooms or apartments to be

be let out at the lowest possible terms; other minor regulations are attached to the plan. The principle on which it is founded is expressed in these words.—"*L'isolement de l'ouvrier* is one of the causes, the most effective of his malady; the remedy is in association."

Cheapness of Food.

The following Table is put forth by the commission of the probable expense of a family of six persons during a week in such an establishment: I insert it, moreover, as evidence of the comparative lowness of the price of food and clothing in Belgium. Its source gives its authenticity:—

	Frs.	*cts.*
"Lodging	2	50
Food, at 1*f.* 50*c.* per day	10	50
Subscription to Infirmary Fire, &c.	1	–
Schooling of Children	–	50
Pension of Old Man	1	–
Clothes	2	50
Furniture, Amusements, &c.	2	–
Frs.	20	–"

Morality and Education.

I do not consider the Belgians a very moral people, and I believe they drink more than most other nations. Hitherto, however, the ordinary beverage has been beer; by which a less fearful character is given to intemperance than by the use of ardent spirits. Gin, however, is much drunk at Antwerp.

Crime.

Crime is considered to be on the decrease in Belgium. The following statistical returns are not without their value; and I have endeavoured to group those which relate to the different provinces, so as to exhibit some rather striking facts:

From 1826 to 1830 there was one accused person to 5,007 inhabitants. From 1830 to 1834 there was one accused person to 6,724 inhabitants. Thus crime in the aggregate diminished.

Education.

In education Belgium is decidedly deficient; one-third of the children are wholly ignorant. The schools are of three classes; viz. communal, *mixte* and private. The first are schools supported by the local municipal funds; *écoles mixtes* are also communal schools, but which derive aid or subsidy from the government or the province. About 400,000 children are receiving education out of a population of 4,250,000, the average being one child educated to 10·7 of the population.

The following Table presents a relative view of the education, criminality, poverty, density of population, proportion of town to country inhabitants, gross population, births and deaths, in each of the nine provinces of Belgium; I have carefully collated it from State documents:

PROVINCES.	Inhabitants to every one Child at School.	Inhabitants to every one Person accused of Crimes.	Number of of Indigent Poor to every 100 Inhabitants.	Number of Country Inhabitants to every one in Towns.	Inhabitants to every 100 Hectares. *	Total Births in 1836.	Total Deaths in 1836.	Gross Population in 1836.
Namur	6·8	6,369	4·4	5·80	62·5	7,554	4,268	227,074
Luxemburg	7·1	8,407	0·7	6·59	47·8	11,752	7,421	323,219
Brabant	9·4	5,924	21·1	2·60	180·4	21,319	15,536	592,250
Hainaut	9·5	17,111	21·3	3·79	175·4	21,192	13,432	631,823
Anvers	9·7	6,138	7·9	1·90	126·8	7,493	8,482	360,180
Limburg	10·2	5,924	10·	4·16	76·9	9,219	7,598	331,305
East Flanders	12·6	5,734	13·3	3·10	253·2	24,090	17,933	758,906
West Flanders	13·5	6,686	20·1	2·76	191·	21,586	16,689	627,128
Liege	16·2	5,440	17·2	3·09	135·4	14,372	9,875	390,715

The average of children at school was less favourable in 1833, when the census gave 11·3 inhabitants to every child at school. The year chosen for the preceding Table was 1836. Namur and Luxemburg presented the largest amount of education in 1833, and the two Flanders the least. There are several infant and adult schools in Belgium, conducted on an efficient scale.

It

* Nearly 2 ½ acres each.

Belgium.

Report from *J. C. Symons*, Esq.

It will be perceived that Liege presents the most ignorance, the most crime, and nearly the greatest proportion of paupers. It is singular that Liege, together with Brabant and Hainaut, are the richest provinces, and those where wages are the highest! If I attempted to explain this, I should say that it arose more probably from the culpable indifference to the morals and minds of the people on the part of those who are at the head of large establishments in more than one of the districts in question. However this may be, I have often found that high wages, without a proportionate mental training, were attended with increased immorality and imprudence, and frequently with positive want.

Prison Discipline.

Work is given to prisoners, and the value of the produce amounts yearly to a million francs; they are employed almost entirely in work for the army. Capital punishments are nearly extinct. There are penitentiaries for women, and "a school of reform" at St. Bernard for criminals under 18 years of age: independently of which, liberated prisoners are placed under the care of the administrative commissions of the "*prisons pour peines*," and under that of the colleges of the governors of the common gaols, with a view of preserving them from relapse, and of facilitating to them the attainment of profitable occupation.

I named in my Report on the state of Glasgow the want of some similar institution in Great Britain; our correctional code is as much too severe, as our reforming discipline is abortive.

Savings Banks.

The savings banks are becoming very popular in Belgium, and the rapid increase of their deposits attests the prosperity of the working classes. In 1833 the money in these banks amounted to only 3,500,000*f.*; in 1835 it had increased to 13,700,000*f.* (of which no less than 10 millions were the deposits of individuals), and on the 1st of March 1838 the money in these banks amounted to within a few francs of 40 millions.

General View of Belgian Manufacture.

Belgium possesses elements of commercial prosperity, which cannot fail to render her ere long a very formidable competitor with Great Britain: her soil is alike rich, inwardly and outwardly: her crops and mines rival each other in the quality and abundance of their produce. The flatness of the country, and the excellence of her harbours, secure her the cheapest possible carriage. Her Legislature, though neither quite wise nor powerful enough to give her entire freedom of trade, have at any rate emancipated her industry from one-half the "protective" injuries which cripple France. She is neither cursed with dear bread, nor heavy taxation; and her people are eminent for the endurance of toil, and both industrious and persevering. These are powerful and certain elements of commercial prowess. It is true, that Belgium has of late, in her speculations and industrial enterprises, been carrying rather too much sail; but the comparative ease with which she is likely to weather a recent squall, is a practical proof that there is substantial and solid strength in her framework.

Ere I bring to a close a Report I fear already unduly protracted, I would beg leave to lay before you, in as condensed a form as possible, the notes and observations I made on the chief branches of industry in Belgium.

The Landed Interest.

Independently of the fertility of the soil, the Belgian land-owners reap large profits from the collateral effects of manufacturing prosperity. This must of course happen wherever new impulses to commerce induce those improvements, buildings, &c., which are among the main causes of *value to land.*

Monsieur Heuschling, first clerk to the Minister of Finances, in a work he has lately edited on Belgian resources, says,—"We ought not to forget to mention the *enormous elevation* which the industrial development, the construction of roads, of railroads, of canals, &c., has produced, in the value of lands and buildings; there are entire *arrondissements* where the difference of price, compared with that of 1830, is more than one quarter."

The landed interest in Belgium, therefore, has been benefited in many district to the amount of 25 per cent., independently of any agricultural operation, bu purely from the increase of manufactures. This is surely an important and instructive fact.

The territorial revenue is calculated at about 81,000,000*f.* per annum. There are 3,422,574 hectares: (a hectare = 2·47 English acres.)

The Cotton Manufacture.

The cotton manufacture in Belgium is said to represent a capital of 60,000,000*f.* Gand, Malines, and the district between these towns, is the locality

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Report from *J. C. Symons*, Esq.

locality of the cotton industry, Gand being the head quarter of the spinners. The produce of the looms amounted two years ago to about a million and a half pieces of ginghams, or coarse cottons and calicoes, and 400,000 pieces of printed cottons: an increase of about 20 per cent. has taken place since.

I had a long conversation with Monsieur de Bast, of Gand, the president of the *Société Cotonnière*, to whom I was introduced by a letter from the King's private secretary. The following are among the most interesting of the various points we discussed, and of the subsequent observations I made at Gand:—

Cotton Spinning.

The number of spindles in the cotton-mills of Belgium just before the Revolution, amounted to 300,000 in Gand, and about 100,000 out of Gand; a diminution took place after that event (to which Mr. Baines alludes in his work on the Cotton Trade, p. 526), and the spindles in activity were reduced by at least 25 per cent. up to the 1st of January 1835, when 301,145 only were in activity. At the present time the number employed exceeds 400,000. The steam-engines employed represent about 1,000 horse-power.

Wages.

Owing to the reasons before given, weaving by power is increasing much in Gand. The following are the wages which I struck from Monsieur Bast's factory:—

135 weavers were paid 1,800*f.* per week, for 14 hours' work per day, making an average of 13*f.* 33*c.* each per week.

In the spinning-mill 143 persons are paid 1,400*f.* per week, making an average of 9*f.* 79*c.* per week.

A good spinner will earn 24*f.* per week, out of which he has 7*f.* 50*c.* to pay to his piecer. Spinners are paid 23*c.* to 25*c.* ($2\frac{1}{4}d.$ to $2\frac{1}{2}d.$) per kilogramme, ($2\frac{1}{5}$ lbs.)

Hours worked.

During six months this year Monsieur de Bast's mill worked 1,950 hours, or 13 hours daily, reckoning 150 working days in the half-year. Just now I was assured they work from 14 to 15 hours. However this may be, the people in the mills, especially the females, looked exceedingly well; and a gentleman, who had seen mills in Scotland, and was with me, was also of opinion, that the people in the Gand mills looked quite as well as those he had seen in Scotland.

Economy of Labour.

M. de Bast was of opinion, that though the labour of individuals was cheaper in Belgium than in England, that the advantage had been greatly overrated hitherto; because, first, the Belgian work-people work like mere automata, and mechanically, whereas he believes in England they are far more skilled and instructed in the art, and are able to explain the machinery, which they are not in Belgium. Again, he is of opinion, that, owing hitherto to the decided inferiority of Belgian to English machinery, many more persons are needed in Gand than in Manchester to perform the operations which come under the head of preparations. This disadvantage is, however, on the point of being forthwith entirely removed. New carding and drawing machinery, modelled on a combination of our best and most recent inventions, is now making progress for more than one of the largest mills of Belgium. I could not write a description of the mechanical difference to which I allude, but you will perfectly understand its effect by the diminution of labour it will cause in a mill of 16,000 spindles; and whereby 41 hands will suffice where 72 are now employed. The fact is, that foreign manufacturers are only now beginning to realize to themselves the full power which the cheapness of labour offers to them, by uniting it with the advantages of improved machinery, in the construction of which, as I shall presently show, they are abundantly aided by denizen engineers from England.

In addition to new carding and bobbing frames, they are introducing self-acting mules.

Mules are almost universally preferred to throstles (of which I saw but few abroad), owing to the much less power they require. They calculate that one-horse power drives 500 mule spindles, but only 200 throstle spindles; and as the object with them is the greatest possible produce, quality being a secondary consideration, they seldom adopt throstles at all.

In one mill in Gand, where I took an exact account of the produce, I found that each spindle produced 30 decagrammes per 72 hours, of No. 30^s, that is, $\frac{33}{50}$ of an English lb., equivalent to $19\frac{4}{5}$ hanks per week.

Belgium.

Report from *J. C. Symons*, Esq.

The drum in a Gand cotton-mill makes 150 revolutions, whilst with us it would make 130.

Mons. de Bast told me, that they frequently buy their cotton at Liverpool, in order to have a better choice. He complained bitterly of being unable hitherto to obtain a foreign market for their cotton twist; but he relied confidently on doing so when their new machinery was completed, which he expects will give an immense impulse to their trade. He believes that our corn-laws will continually operate in increasing the facility and encouraging the progress of foreign manufactures. All the continental manufacturers I met, spoke most joyously of the exceedingly small chance the English manufacturers have of getting the corn-laws repealed. They speak of the landed interest in England in terms of great affection.

The Flax and Linen Manufactures.

Flax forms one of the main sources of Belgian industry. The two Flanders produce alone the value of 30,000,000*f.* to 40,000,000*f.* per annum. The damasks of Courtrai, and many other towns, are too widely celebrated to require mention. Of common linen cloth, 750,000 pieces, value about 100,000,000*f.*, were sold in 1836 in the different market-towns in Belgium.

The spinning of flax by power is engaging the active attention of the Belgian capitalists, as well as of other nations. Mr. Cockerill, the iron king of Liege, and who engages in nearly every department of industry in Belgium, has already a very prosperous flax-spinning mill at Liege, of which the engine is of ninety-horse power; two more are building at Gand. We have not the same advantages for the purchase of the raw material as we enjoy in the cotton trade. Not only do France and Belgium produce the finest flax within sight of their rising mills, but the river Lys is invaluable for its bleaching qualities. The flax industry, first and last, employs 400,000 persons in Belgium.

Cloth Trade.

Next to the linen, the cloth trade is the most lucrative of the textile manufactures of Belgium.

A capital of at least 80,000,000*f.* is embarked in this branch, and about 14,000,000*f.* are yearly expended in the purchase of foreign wool, the indigenous wool barely reaching a figure of 200,000*f.*

Verviers is the seat of the plain-cloth manufacture, in which Mr. Cockerill is said to be much interested; and I saw, when there, another new mill of gigantic dimensions erecting by this individual.

A report from the Chamber of Commerce at Verviers in 1833, represented the workmen employed there in the cloth manufacture to amount to 40,000; the annual production was calculated at 100,000 pieces of cloth, of a value of nearly 25,000,000*f.* or 1,000,000*l.* sterling.

In 1812 the trade and population of Verviers amounted to not one-half the present amount. The looms were one-half, but the produce has been trebled.

Carpet Factory.

There is a large carpet manufacturer at Tournai of 90 looms, where every description of carpeting is made. I was not able to get a sight of it, but I learnt the wages averaged 3*f.* per day for the good weavers, and 2*f.* 25*c.* for the second class. Seven-eighths of the whole produce are exported. The total length of carpeting produced in Belgium annually, averages 120,000 metres, or about 1,573,333 yards.

Iron Manufacture.

Iron is the basis of Belgian prosperity. Her iron alone will impart power to Belgium in her career of industrial progress.

The iron mines are situated almost entirely in Namur, Liege, and that part of Hainaut which flanks the River Sambre.

In 1837 there were 23 high furnaces of coke and 66 of charcoal in Belgium; 20 new furnaces of coke are either completed, or being erected since that period. On the plain of Selessin, near Liege, a company are erecting six of a colossal magnitude, which, when finished, will be the largest on the continent.

The quantity of iron founded in the year in Belgium was estimated at 150,000 *tonnes* (or about 147,640 English tons); it is now increased.

The following are the current prices of iron per *tonne*:—

	1st Quality.	2d Quality.
1830	465*f.*	390*f.*
1832	412*f.*	322*f.*
1834	393*f.*	304*f.*
1836	413*f.*	324*f.*

One

Belgium.

Report from *J. C. Symons*, Esq.

Machine-making Establishments.

One of the most ungainsayble evidences of the progress of manufacturing industry in a country, is unquestionably that of the number of its machine-making establishments. In these, for extent Belgium surpasses, in proportion to her size and population every nation in the world; whilst she can hardly be considered permanently second to England in mechanical perfection, when English engineers are at the head of all her establishments, English patents open to her immediate adoption, and English artisans in nearly all her *ateliers*.

Mr. Cockerill.

Of these establishments, that of Mr. Cockerill, of Liege, is, if I am rightly informed, the second largest in the world. The motive steam-power at the works at Seraing is 900 horse, divided among sixteen engines. The number of workmen there, varies from 2,000 to 2,300; and Mr. Cockerill has also an establishment at his residence at Liege, where he employs 700 more men,—all these in the production of machines, from spinning-machines up to steam-engines. It is difficult to name any large enterprize of manufacturing industry, whether in Belgium, Holland, Russia, or the immense territory of the Prussian league, with which Mr. Cockerill is unconnected, either as a shareholder, or as the engineer from whom the machinery emanates. He has spinning-mills of flax, cotton or wool, in almost all the chief districts for these manufactures in the Prussian and Belgian dominions. Mr. Cockerill's name is on all the locomotive engines on the Belgian railroads, and I was told that he is the contractor for those now forming in Prussia.

When we remember that Mr. Cockerill's father, who established this gigantic concern, came over to Belgium a common blacksmith, and could neither write nor read (I believe), till the day of his death; when we further consider that the machinery he turns out is, after all, of secondary reputation for quality, and extremely dear; we may form some idea of the magnitude of the natural advantages Belgium affords to the manufacture of machinery, and which may be reckoned as the multiplier of all her other productive powers.

Mr. Cockerill, extensive as are his enterprises, by no means monopolises the making of machines. The Messrs. Fairburn have issued prospectuses of an establishment which is to be formed at the large factory already built at Malines, near the railroad-station: Mr. William Fairburn is to superintend the heavy department for engines, locomotives, &c.; and Mr. Peter Fairburn that for spinning-machinery, and especially for flax-spinning. There can be no question that this establishment will rival any in England. In addition to these is the Company of the Phœnix, at Gand, on a very large scale, and in which English and Scotch engineers are already engaged. There is, likewise, another at Brussels, about the existence of which some mystery is made. I owe the knowledge of it to Sir Hamilton Seymour, who kindly accompanied me to see it; and, owing to his good offices, we obtained the unusual favour of being allowed to inspect the interior. It is of large dimensions, covering 2½ bonniers, of about 6,500 square feet each. This establishment belongs to one of the *Sociétés Anonymes*, of which the *Banque Nationale* is said to be at the head. Five hundred workmen, of nearly all nations, except France (whose operatives are not in repute in Belgium), are employed. Some of Sharp & Roberts' machinery was there. The present motive-power is not above 36 horses.

There are several old established machine-makers in different towns in Belgium, but few on the same scale as those I have named. The fact is, that this industry is yet in the first stage only of its development.

Mr. Cockerill often boasts, that he has all the new inventions over at Seraing ten days after they come out in England.

Coal.

There is but one chance of an obstacle to the career of Belgium in her manufacturing progress of competition with England, and that one Her Majesty's Government have recently, no doubt with the best intentions, instructed their minister at Brussels to use his best exertions to remove—exertions which have met with the kindliest reception and success on the part of Belgium. I allude to the decreasing stock and increasing price of coal in that country. The following table of its rapid rise in price is extracted from statistical returns:—

	1836:	1837:
Mons	*frs.* 7 & 8 per *tonne*	*frs.* 12 & 13 per *tonne.*
Charleroi	*frs.* 13 & 14 „	*frs.* 18 & 19 „

Belgium.

Report from *J. C. Symons*, Esq.

Prior to 1836 Mons coal was 8*f.* per *tonne* at the *maximum*: it has risen in price again since last year; and the Belgian government have consequently assented to the prayer of the English Government, to be allowed to supply them free of duty. A similar favour has been obtained, though not quite to the same extent, in France.

It is not for me to discuss the policy of this conduct on our part: all I have to state is, that the manufacturers of Belgium look upon the importation of English coal as a God-send.

GENERAL SUMMARY.

General Summary.

I have already shown that wages in the chief branches of industry are higher here than abroad. I will endeavour to exhibit the degree in which they differ. The price of corn and of the chief articles of food in France and Belgium, for instance, compared with the price here, is, on an average, in the ratio of three to four. The following, as nearly as it can be calculated, will be the difference in wages:—

Classes of Labourers.	Weekly Wages.		Difference, after adding one-third for greater Cost of Food in England.
	France and Belgium.	England.	
	f. *c.* *s.* *d.*	*s.* *d.*	*s.* *d.*
1st Class Mechanics - -	15 – = 12 6	20 –	3 4
2d Class Mechanics - -	10 80 = 9 –	14 –	2 –
Farm Labourers - - -	7 80 = 6 6	10 –	1 4
Spinning Factory Labourers, Men, Women, and Children - - -	7 50 = 6 3	10 6	2 2

I have obtained from the Board of Trade the exact prices of wheat at the following places last year (1838):—

PRUSSIA.

	s.	*d.*	
Dantzig - - -	38	11¾	per Winchester Qu[r]
Koningsburg -	35	3¼	- - ditto.

AUSTRIA.

	s.	*d*	
Venice - - - -	33	8	per Winchester Qu[r].
Trieste - - - -	31	7	- - ditto.

BELGIUM.

	s.	*d.*	
Antwerp - -	48	5¾	per Imperial Quarter.

FRANCE.

	s.	*d.*	
Paris - - - -	49	10	per Winchester Quarter
Havre - - -	47	–	- - ditto.
Marseilles -	51	10	- - ditto.

Having thus shown that corn is cheap where wages are likewise low, I wish to deprecate the inference, that the latter is a result of the former fact. Corn is cheap in the above-named countries, because the quantity required can be produced there with comparatively little labour, and for no other reason. I am aware it has been held that wages must fall here, if food be cheapened by the importation of foreign corn.

As the payment of foreign corn with *money* would necessarily raise prices abroad, and lower them here, the money would return to the cheapest market to purchase commodities, as is invariably the case when the slightest inequalities occur. It may therefore be safely assumed, that foreign corn could sooner or later be repaid alone by British commodities: to the production of these commodities an extra quantity of labour would be required; and the demand for it increasing without an equal increase in the supply: the value of labour must rise how, then, could its price fall? Abroad wages would also rise, but chiefly in the factories, where at all times the labourers, owing to their preference for agricultural labour, are alone induced to remain [*see* Mr. Kennedy's letter] by a higher rate of wages. The additional demand for agricultural labour created by our increased demand for foreign corn, would cause manufacturing wages to rise abroad as well as here, *but with this signal difference*, that the self-same increase of British manufactures for the payment of foreign corn, which would raise profits as well as wages here, will *reduce* the profits of the manufacturer, by competition

petition with him abroad, *lessening* instead of *increasing* his ability to bid higher in the market of labour. General Summary.

In this country the profits of the capitalist will be raised in the four following ways: 1. By the opening of new markets for their manufacturing produce in exchange for corn. 2. By the diminution of the cost of production in proportion to the extent in which corn enters into it (as, for instance, by the use of horses and flour for dressing, and starch.) 3. By the repeal of taxes, facilitated by the additional revenue arising from the increased consumption of taxable articles which the cheapening of food necessarily produces. 4. By the lower price of the articles which the capitalist personally consumes. Report from *J. C. Symons*, Esq.

The general conclusions I deduce from my inquiry are these:— General Conclusions.

1. That there are few hand-loom weavers abroad, such as the suffering class so designated here.

2. That hand-loom weaving exists as a separate trade only in the fancy or artistical departments, wherein the rate of labour is the same as in other skilled trades, with a slight reduction, owing to the pleasantness of the occupation.

3. That plain weaving exists abroad almost exclusively as an occupation for weak persons, and during the intervals of other employment.

4. That the condition of hand-loom weavers abroad is that of other classes of workmen with which they are for the most part identified.

5. That there is a marked equality of wages in all departments of labour in the same country abroad; each affected alone as to the rate of wages by natural causes, varying with the variations of demand and supply, skill required, &c.

6. That this equality of wages results from the almost entire absence of combinations among workmen to limit supply of labour and monopolise employment in particular trades.

7. That this rarity of combinations arises from the greater facility in most countries for procuring food; but chiefly from a difference in the character of the people.

8. That employment and food depend primarily on capital, and that this depends, first, on the abundance and fertility of land, and all other natural agents of production; secondly, on the facility with which a country can supply by exchange its deficiency in the territorial and spontaneous sources of wealth; and, thirdly, on the skill, dexterity and judgment with which labour is applied under either or both of these circumstances.

9. That these being the necessary conditions of increasing wealth, we may be certain that when a country prospers in spite of its own perverse rejection of the second condition or element of wealth, it must be highly favoured in respect of the first. Austria, Belgium, &c. are instances of this state. On the other hand, a prosperous condition of society, under however great natural disadvantages, may lead us unerringly to the conclusion, that it has had the wisdom to supply its deficiency in the first element of wealth, by a free and full recourse to the second; one which cannot but give the widest scope and stimulus to the auxiliary operation of the skill, dexterity and judgment of the industrial classes. Switzerland presents an eminent example of this state.

10. That the adequacy of the soil of a country to feed its population without freedom of exchange, will not produce so much wealth as freedom of exchange without adequacy of territorial subsistence.

11. That this is proved by the examples of France and Switzerland; France with great fertility and abundance of indigenous food, but encumbered with restrictions on exchange, possessing much less wealth, proportioned to her population, than Switzerland, *with* freedom of exchange, and *no* territorial sufficiency of sustenance, added to other local disadvantages.

12. That the productive energies of this country are peculiarly oppressed by our existing corn-laws, which prevent the more extended exchange of what we can best produce and spare with what other countries can best spare, and we most want.

 13. That

General Conclusions.

Report from *J. C. Symons*, Esq.

13. That the necessary effect of this system is to diminish the amount of commodities or wealth in the country which thus decreases the fund for the employment of labour, whilst it raises the price of the labourers' food.

14. That we are, moreover, forcing foreign countries to manufacture those goods for their increasing population which they have hitherto purchased from us, and would continue to purchase from us to a still greater amount, were we enabled to take the agricultural produce which they can best spare in return.

15. That this increase of manufacture abroad, especially in the weaving department, is incontestably proved by the decrease of our exportation of woven goods, and by the corresponding increase of our far less valuable exportation of yarn, which has been nearly doubled since 1832; and that the continued increase of machine-making establishments abroad, directed by British talent, is a conclusive proof, together with the erection of new spinning-mills where wages are comparatively low, that we are likely to experience a check to our commerce in the spinning, as well as in the weaving manufactures.

16. That it is therefore essential to the preservation of those powers of production which we have eminently enjoyed, and which alone enable us to sustain our rapidly increasing population, to relieve them from restrictions which they are daily less able to withstand,—restrictions which cannot augment the produce they are designed to protect, to any thing like the amount to which they lessen the commodities we have so much greater capacity to create.

I have the honour to be, Gentlemen,

Your obedient, humble servant,

Jelinger C. Symons,
Assistant Commissioner.

APPENDIX

TO

MR. SYMONS'S FOREIGN REPORT.

Belgium.

Appendix to Foreign Report from *J. C. Symons*, Esq.

Since my Report was in type, I have received a letter from M. Quetelet, of Brussels, the material portion of which is as follows:—

"La manière d'être dans nos differentes provinces est, en effet, assez dissemblable. Dans les Flandres, par exemple, les tisserands sont surtout répandus dans les campagnes, et ils travaillent quand ils ne sont pas occupés de travaux de la terre. La main-d'œuvre y est à très-bas prix; et un ouvrier qui travaille toute une journée, ne gagne, au plus, que de 8 à 10 *sous du pays* (75*c.* à 90*c.*) Ce métier est à-peu-près le moins productif pour celui qui l'exerce: l'introduction des mécaniques ne peut que le faire tomber de plus en plus. La main-d'œuvre pour les ouvriers charpentiers, maçons, etc., est d'un prix beaucoup plus elevé, et plus que le double. Nos ouvriers font encore beaucoup usage de liqueurs fortes, du genièvre en particulier: dans les villes ils conservent l'usage de perdre le Lundi, mais ils ne se feront pas scrupule de travailler le Dimanche matin. Ce qui rendroit difficile une réponse complète à votre lettre c'est, que les ouvriers de nos différentes provinces ne se ressemblent pas: il n'y a pris qu'aucune analogie entre le Liègois et le Flamand, par exemple."

At the same time the following documents were communicated to me by the Board of Trade; they are from an engineer and manufacturer in Belgium, Mr. Grenville Withers, of Marchienne au Point, near Charleroi, who states that "his practical duties and personal acquaintance with many of the leading men of the country, enable him to speak his opinion on manufacturing questions with assurance." Without in any degree vouching for the accuracy of the facts detailed by this gentleman, who is personally unknown to me, I think it my duty to append them to the foregoing pages, as they appear to have been collated with care. The queries to which these papers refer were as follows:—

Queries used in the Inquiry in Belgium.

1. What description of articles are manufactured chiefly in ————?
2. What are the gross average wages of labour earned by men, women and young persons respectively per week, stating the number of hours worked?
3. Are the labourers paid by piece-work, and, if so, at what rate, describing the quantity of the article manufactured, to which the stated price is attached, and the quantity usually completed in a given time?
4. What changes have occurred in the ratio of wages, especially during the last 10 years?
5. What have been the causes of such changes?
6. What has been the increase or decrease of the trade in ———— during the last 10 years, and has the supply of labour varied in a similar ratio?
7. What is the moral condition of the labourers, and what changes are taking place in it?
8. What are the means of education, and in what degree are they profited by, by the labouring classes?
9. What are the average sale prices of the medium quality of the different articles manufactured at ————, accompanied, if possible, with patterns?

The above queries were often varied according to the person (or branch of manufacture.)

Belgium.

Appendix to Foreign Report from *J. C. Symons*, Esq.

QUERIES as to the condition of the ENGINEER ARTISANS of *Belgium*, and those at Forges and Foundries.

1. How many classes of workmen are there employed in these trades respectively?

2. What are the rates of labour, and what are the average net earnings of each class of workmen per week?

3. What are their hours of labour?

4. What changes have occurred in the rate of the above-named wages during the last 10 years, specifying the period at which such changes have occurred?

5. What have been the causes of such changes?

6. Has there been any increase in the general morality of the workmen, especially as regards sobriety, and what other changes are observable in their condition; in what manner has education been altered by the resolution as regards the school system?

7. As regards the engineer business generally, is it on the increase or on the decline in Belgium?

8. In what points above named does the establishment of Mr. John Cockerill differ from the rest of Belgium?

Jelinger C. Symons.

CLOTH MANUFACTORY and FLANNELS.

THE manufacture of woollen cloth and flannels is an important and lucrative branch of trade in Belgium; it is increasing, not from any accident or forced speculation, but from the steady persevering activity of the manufacturers, and the low price of wages in the cloth district. The centre of this manufacture is at Verviers; but all the country, from Liege to Aix-la-Chapelle, is more or less occupied with it: it is exported to Holland, Italy and America. The system of manufacturing is something like what it was 40 years ago in the west of England, about Stroud; but the *finish* of the cloths is still more in arrear: however, they are now getting English machinery and English *finishers*, and are, of course, changing their system, and improving the quality of their goods. Labour is much cheaper here than in Yorkshire; but then they employ more hands to do the same quantity of work, and cloth is decidedly cheaper and better in point of finish in Yorkshire than in Verviers. I made several journies to England to examine minutely into all the processes of carding, spinning, weaving and dressing. I bought cloths in the white unfinished, half finished, three parts finished, and, in almost every state, from the grease to the entire finish; *parts* of these cloths were partly or wholly finished at Leeds, and the corresponding parts underwent the same operations at Verviers. In *every experiment* the English finished cloth was the best.

The moving power employed is water principally, the country abounding in small waterfalls. Within the last four years a great number of steam-engines, from 8 to 20 horses' power, have been put up, and the number is still increasing, though coals at Verviers are 1*l.* sterling per ton.

As I have observed in another place, the working classes in the cloth districts are religious, cleanly and economical, which is owing to the praiseworthy exertions of some of the principal manufacturers, who set a good example in their lives and actions, and exact good behaviour from their dependents.

Price of labour,—

	f.	*c.*		
Boys and girls under 14 years -	–	50	per day of	11 working hours.
Women and youths - - -	1	–	,,	,,
Labourers - - - -	1	50	,,	,,
Wool-washers, pickers, dyers, &c.	2	–	,,	,,
Carders, preparers, spinners -	2	25	,,	,,
Master carders, &c. - - -	3	–	,,	,,

Weavers 15 to 50 centimes, according to quality; average 1*f.* 80*c.* per day.

Master dyer - - - -	7	–	,,	,,
Master pressman, finisher - -	5	–	,,	,,

Book-keeper, 4, 6, 8 and 12*f.* per day.

The

The Hand-weaving looms for cloth (there are no POWER-LOOMS for cloth in Belgium) have increased as below stated :—

1790 - weaving-looms for cloth in Belgium - -	500	producing 20,000	pieces* annually.
1812 „	1,188	„ 47,500	„
1815 „	1,638	„ 65,500	„
1834 „	2,800	„ 112,000	„

The average price is estimated at 250 *f.* the piece.

There are 192 principal manufacturers, 32 water-mills, equal to 334 horse-power, and 74 steam-engines, equal to 573 horse-power.

The amount of capital employed in the manufacture of cloth is estimated at 75 millions of francs. Men, women and children employed in the factories, 20,000.

Consumption of the interior - -	72,000	pieces annually.
Exported to Switzerland - - -	5,000	„ „
„ Germany - - -	1,000	„ „
„ Italy - - - -	15,000	„ „
„ Holland - - -	5,000	„ „
„ Levant - - -	10,000	„ „
„ Beyond Seas - - -	4,000	„ „

TABLE of the PROPORTIONABLE VALUES of the INGREDIENTS of MANUFACTURE.

[Let us suppose a manufactory of Cloth at Verviers, for making 3,000 ends of Cloth yearly, value £. 10 each, £. 30,000.]

		£. s. d.
1. Cost of wool for 3,000 ends - - - - - - - - -	50 per cent.	15,000 – –
2. Dyeing the various colours - - - - - - - -	10 „	3,000 – –
3. Oil, soap, teazles, glue, &c. &c. - - - - - - -	8 „	2,400 – –
4. Coals - - - - - - - - - - - - - -	2 „	600 – –
5. Workmen's wages of all descriptions - - - - - -	22 „	1,600 – –
6. Interest on buildings, machinery, &c., estimated at £. 30,000 -	5 „	1,500 – –
7. Interest of floating capital of £. 18,000, at 5 per cent. - - -	3 „	900 – –
	100 „	30,000 – –

It is only by establishing similar analysis that correct comparisons can be obtained, and the relative advantages which one manufacturer has over another can be fairly calculated. On reference, it will be seen that cloth contains 50 per cent. of wool, or say half its value; and as both countries go to the same market to purchase the raw material, it is presumed that the advantages are equal, though I have often remarked that the same qualities of wool have been much dearer in England than at Verviers, and, on the contrary, I have sometimes found it cheaper in London; however, these variations will happen, according as the demand may be brisker here or there.

In this estimate coals are taken at two per cent. on the fiftieth part of the value of cloth, and here undoubtedly there is one per cent. in favour of the English manufacturer. But we see the value and the necessity of analysing the price of manufactures. We are too apt to think and calculate in round numbers, and we frequently hear it said that the low price of coals in England gives such very great advantages to the English manufacturer, and it is so in all metallingical operations, but in the cloth trade, as we have just seen, the difference is too trifling for consideration: labour or wages we find estimated at 22 per cent., or rather more than one-fifth of the value of the article: now if the ratios here given be correct, and I believe they are, it will follow, notwithstanding a much higher rate of wages, that cloth is manufactured cheaper in England than on the continent,

* A piece of cloth is equal to 24 yards English.

Belgium.

Appendix to Foreign Report from *J. C. Symons*, Esq.

Worsted Spinning and Stuff Weaving.

Worsted from long wool up to 1822 used to be spun by hand. The first machinery for spinning worsted on the English system, was put to work at Tournay in 1822; there are now several spinning factories, two at Verveirs, two at Liege, one at Brussels, two at Tournay; nearly the whole of the machinery was made under my direction; there are altogether about 3,600 throstle spindles, spinning on an average 5,000 lbs. per week, from Nos. 10 to No. 18. There is no demand for any thing above No. 40.

This worsted is all consumed forknitting and hosiery goods.

Duties are raised.

Mr. Haddon & Sons, of Aberdeen, used to send large quantities of worsted to Belgium. The wool employed by the Belgium spinners is principally English skin wool, and super matching.

Several attempts have been made to introduce the manufacture of worsted stuffs, but they have all failed; there is a great consumption of that article, which is supplied by the Yorkshire houses.

N. B.—The worsted trade is increasing very much since the augmentation of the tariff last year.

Duty on Worsted coming into Belgium 60 *f.* per 100 kilogrammes = 220 lbs. nearly; this is almost a prohibition.

Price of labour in worsted factories :—	*f.*	*c.*		*s.*	*d.*	
Girls under 14 years of age - -	–	60	=	–	$5\frac{3}{4}$	per day.
Young women - - - - -	1	–	,,	–	$9\frac{3}{4}$	,,
Men employed as labourers - -	1	60	,,	1	$3\frac{1}{2}$	,,
Engineman - - - - -	2	50	,,	2	–	,,
Overlookers - - - - -	3	50	,,	2	10	,,

Woolcombers - super skin - - - 4*d.* per lb. English.
,, super matching - - 5*d.* ,,

Hours of labour 6 to 7, or 11 hours' labour.

Price of soft soap for washing the wool, $4\frac{1}{2}d.$ per pound English.

Ditto coals at Verviers, 25*f.* per ton.

Ditto - - Brussels, 30*f.* ,,

Oil used upon wool is 5*d.* per pound English, or 1*f.* 15 *c.* the kilogramme.

Notwithstanding the above low rate of wages, a pound of worsted is spun at less cost in Yorkshire than in Belgium, by at least 40°/₀ to 80°/₀.

No export trade: this branch of trade is increasing very much, in consequence of the additional duty laid last year on all worsted goods imported.

N. B.—One hank of No. 20, or 560 yards, costs in combing by machine, spinning, and *all* expenses of workmanship and general expenses, nearly 5*c.* 1*f.* per pound; taken from the book at Verviers.

Carpets.

These are made at Tournay, and the price of labour quoted for hosiery will serve for this branch of trade. The worsted for these carpets is spun from the wool grown in the country. English wool has been spun for this purpose; but the manufacturer assures me, and I believe with truth, that it is of too *close* or heavy nature, and that the colours are less *brilliant*. This used to be a very flourishing trade at Tournay, but it has been declining ever since the Revolution. I believe the cause of this decline will be found to be the expensive system of working, and the want of activity in the manufacturers; they have the advantage of labour at a very low rate, and coals are as cheap at Tournay as any place in Belgium, and yet they are losing their trade.

Flax Spinning and Linen Weaving.

The cultivation of flax, and the manufacture of it into thread and linen cloth, is the most important branch of trade and commerce of this country. The cultivation goes on increasing, but the manufacture is rapidly decreasing, and probably will soon be lost to the country, from the superior cheapness of the English linens, and the decided superiority of the English spun thread. There are at present upwards of 300,000 persons employed in the cultivation and manufacture of flax in Flanders. The exports of raw flax amount to 12 millions

Value of Exports.

of

of pounds; the exports of linens, nearly 14 millions of francs, and the home consumption is estimated at 12 millions of francs annually. Belgium.

The combing, spinning and weaving of flax in Flanders is really a domestic manufacture, carried on at every fire-side, and filling up intervals of time between other occupations, or when bad weather or long nights put a stop to the labours of the field. It is in every respect exactly what it was a thousand years ago. Wages, as it may well be supposed, are low, and if it were not for the English machinery, it would be impossible to contend with them in point of price. As it is, the low price of labour is of little use to them, unless it be to blind them to the many and great advantages of machine labour. The Flemish manufacturers persist in their system, and lustily oppose the introduction of spinning by machinery; and not only the manufacturers, but the whole population of Flanders, is opposed to it, as injurious to their interests, as if any change could operate to the prejudice of a man condemned to work all day for *thirteen-pence!* System of Labour.

The stupidity of such notions is too flagrant; and Government have ordered inquests to be made, and the questions have been thoroughly examined. Several Reports have been published, showing the superior advantages of the machine system, and the absolute necessity of adopting it, under pain of losing the most ancient, most important and lucrative branch of their trade,—all labour lost upon these roundheads: you may as well whistle to the winds as attempt to reason with a Flamand after he has formed his own opinion. What was thrown away upon the Flemish boors, was not lost; and the rage for "Sociétés Anonymes" enabled the friends of the new and despised system to put their plans into execution. There are at present four companies formed for spinning flax by machinery; viz. Obstinacy of the Flemish.

One at Liege -	20,000 spindles -	patron, Cockerill -	machines made by him.
,, Bruxelles	10,000 ,, -	,,	Engler & Co., part in England.
,, Malines -	20,000 ,, -	,,	Bank of Belgium, ditto - ditto.
,, Ghent -	20,000 ,, -	,,	,, made at Ghent, English models.

Spinning by Machinery.

None of these societies have begun to spin, and it is doubtful if they ever will do, except the Company at Ghent, who have gone too far to recede. I understand the machinery is very badly made, though constructed from models brought from England. I feel confident that not one of the four will be in existence three years hence. The speculation might be a good one; but it must be made by practical men, and not public companies, who never have, and never will succeed as manufacturers, and, above all, in the manufacture of flax.

He who would succeed, and gain a fortune by spinning flax in Flanders, must have a large capital in patience, prudence and practical knowledge; and he must begin his first operations upon a small scale. I was consulted by all these companies, and that was the opinion I gave; it did not square with their private interests, and, of course, was not adopted.

The average rate of wages, as far as I can depend upon my information, is as follows:— Price of Labour.

	f.	*c.*	*s.*	*d.*	
Girls, under 14 years old - - -	–	40 =	–	$3\frac{3}{4}$	per day.
Women - - - - - -	–	70 =	–	$6\frac{1}{2}$	,,
Men - - - - - -	1	40 =	1	$1\frac{1}{2}$	,,
Combing or hickling 1 lb. of flax -	–	– =	–	$-\frac{1}{2}$	,,

As I have before observed, it is not the price paid for a day's labour, nor the price paid for making one pound, or one yard, or one piece; but it is the quantity, and the quality, and the waste, and many other things which must be considered, and which determine the cost price of any and every article of manufacture.

Suppose a man be paid two-pence for doing a quantity of work, and it be badly done, and too much waste be made in doing it, and another man does the same quantity of work much better, and with less waste, for which he receives four-pence; then I say that the higher price is the cheaper; and I say this from long experience, and having had frequently to calculate the difference. I will give another example from my own experience. You shall employ two men to forge each of them a machine from the same model or drawing; one of them shall do his work with half the coal, in half the time, without burning the iron, and the machine shall be fitted up with half the labour of filing; here is an Reflection.

Belgium.

Appendix to Foreign Report from *J. C. Symons*, Esq.

Labour cheaper in England than on the Continent.

enormous difference; a much greater difference than you can make in paying these workmen. You must give to the worst of the two 3*f.* 50*c.*, and to the other, 7*f.*, and yet you will have double the profit from the latter. Now this is the case between English workmen and workmen out of England; and if you make your calculations without taking this into consideration, you will come to false conclusions, and be led into error. No man in Europe has been engaged in so many branches of trade, and large undertakings, on the continent as I have; continually calculating, comparing and examining into the circumstances of each case; and I am convinced that labour is done much cheaper in England than in France or Belgium.

PRICE of COALS, and Labour of getting, at CHARLEROI.

		f.	*c.*			*f.*	*c.*	
1820	coals were	6	–	the ton;	the pitman	1	10,	working 10 hours.
1830	,, ,,	9	–	,,	,,	1	20	,, ,,
1837	,, ,,	18	–	,,	,,	2	–	only 6 hours.
1839	,, ,,	15	60	,,	,,	2	–	,, ,,

Quality.

There are three distinct qualities of coals in Belgium,—

	f.	*c.*	
1. Terre houille, very inferior quality, sells at the pit	9	–	per ton.
2. Charbon maigre, used for heating furnaces, ditto	13	80	,,
3. Charbon gras, or caking-coal, carbonised for blast furnaces - - - -	15	60	,,

Pits.

The veins of coal run from 1 foot to 4 feet in thickness; the average thickness is 30 inches; the depth of pits is from 800 feet to 1,700 feet, and most of them subject to flood and fire. These circumstances render the working expensive, and account for the high price of the coals. The steam-engines used for raising the coals are all upon the high-pressure principle, and from thirty to forty horses'-power. The engines used for pumping are of all sorts, forms and principle; there are some of them very powerful, with cylinders from 80 inches to 90 inches diameter.

Direction of Veins.

The coal-fields run from east to west, from Valenciennes to Aix-la-Chapelle, by Mons, Marimont, Charleroi, Namur, Liege, Battice to Stolberg near Aix-la-Chapelle.

Work-people.

The pits are worked by persons of both sexes, and there are as many girls and young women as there are boys and men. The immorality of this system is as

Morals.

might be expected. In other respects, colliers here resemble colliers every where; they work hard when they are badly paid, and drink hard when wages exceed the necessary.

BLAST FURNACES for making PIG-IRON.

Coke Furnaces.

In the province of Liege there are 16 coke furnaces ,, ,, Charleroi ,, 29 ,, -	Total -	45
Of which, there are new ones not yet put to work - - -		17
		28
Ditto - - ditto - put out for want of orders - - -		18
Total at work -		10

Average produce every 24 hours = 9 Tons. each = 90 Tons. = tons, 32,850 per ann.

Charcoal Furnaces.

Blast furnaces working with charcoal -	67		
Ditto - ditto for want of orders - -	48		
Total at work - -	19,	produce tons	13,870 per ann.
Total produce of pigs - - tons -			46,720 ,,
Total yearly produce of blast furnaces, in tons - -			46,720

A small quantity exported to France and Prussia.

Number

Belgium.

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Number of coke furnaces in Belgium - -

1821	- - - 1
1830	- - - 4
1833	- - - 8
1835	- - - 14
1836	- - - 19
1837, 8	- - - 45

I send you a sample of the mineral (alluvial) from which iron is extracted: it yields, on an average, 30%. The qualities are as various as the pits from which they are dug, and much careful washing is necessary to deprive the mineral of its impurities. The price of the mineral varies with the quality, and a great deal of chicane and deception is employed by the dealers. Quality equal to sample is worth at this time 20 *f.* per ton. Mineral.

Expense of making one ton of pigs,— Cost Price.

Tons.		*f.*	*c.*		*f.*	*c.*
3, 3	of mineral - - -	at 20	–	per ton -	66	–
2	- coke - - -	27	–	„ - -	54	–
1	- limestone (calcaire) - - -			„ - -	6	–
	Labour and general expenses -			„ - -	11	50

	f.	*c.*	£.	*s.*	*d.*
Cost price - -	*f.* 137	50 =	5	9	–
Pigs for foundry sell at 150 *f.* per ton „ forge „ 130 *f.* „ } average, sells	140	– =	5	11	–
Net profit on one ton of pigs -	2	50 =	–	2	–

Cost Price in Wales, 3 *l.* 10 *s.*

Number of workmen, and price of labour to one blast furnace,— Labour.

		f.	*c.*
10	labourers - - - per day each - - -	1	80
4	furnace-men - - „ - - - -	2	50
2	head-men - - - „ - - - -	4	–
2	men to coke-ovens „ - - - -	2	–
2	engine-men - - „ - - - -	2	–
2	women to wheel cinders „ - - - -	1	–

In England this quantity of labour would be much better done with eight men.

Hours of labour from six to six, night and day: workmen of the lowest class of labourers, without the least instruction, and guided solely in their operations by routine. I do not know one intelligent man amongst them: they are very inferior to the furnace-men in England.

The English and Welsh pig-iron is very superior in quality to the pig-iron made in Belgium: this is owing to the superiority of the English mine and coal. Great quantities of pigs are imported from Wales.

REGNIER-PONCELET et CHARLES DESOER, Fabricans d'Aciers, de Limes, de Mécaniques, etc, à LIEGE.

Aciers Ordinaires en Barres.	*f.*	
Acier de commerce de 6 l. de France et au-dessus -	à 85	les 100 kilog.
Acier au double marteau idem - - - -	à 100	„
Aciers Fondus Forgés.		
De 1 à 2 ½ lignes carré et plat - - - -	à 300	„
„ 3 à 6 - idem - - idem - - - -	à 190	„
„ 7 et au-dessus - idem - - - - -	à 180	„
Aciers Fondus en Tôles		
No. 6 à 19, jauge Anglaise - - - - -	à 180	„
„ 20 à 24 - - idem - - - - -	à 190	„
„ 25 à 28 - - idem - - - - -	à 210	„
Limes Rustiques en Paquets.		
Carreaux carrés, plats et demi-ronds - -	à *f.* 1·70	le kilog.
Limes en paille de 1, 2 et 3 6/4 id. - - -	„ 1· –	le paquet.
Idem - - de 1, 2 et 3 7/4 id. - - -	„ 1·15	- idem.
Idem - - de 1, 2 et 3 9/4 id. - - -	„ 1.35	- idem.

LAMINOIRS et FORGES de la Société anonyme de MARCINELLE et TOUILLET.—Prix-courant des Fers, le 4 Fev. 1839.

Designation des Fers.	Dimensions. En Millimétres.	Dimensions. En Lignes de France.	Prix par 100 Kilog. Qualities 1ere	2me	3me	Fer de Masses.
			f. c.	f. c.	f.	f.
Fers plats	31 et plus sur 7 et plus	14 et plus sur 3 et plus	38 –	36 –	33	46
	21 à 30 sur 7 et plus	9½ à 13½ sur 3 et plus	40 –	38 –	35	48
	11 à 20 sur 7 et plus	5 à 9 sur 3 et plus	42 –	40 –	38	50
Fers ronds et carrés	43 et au-dessus	19 et plus	40 –	38 –	36	48
	21 à 42	9½ à 13½	38 –	36 –	33	46
	15 à 20	7 à 9	42 –	40 –	38	50
	7 à 14	3 à 6½	52 –	50 –	48	60
Feuillards ou spatés	31 et plus sur 4 à 6	14 et plus sur 2 à 3	45 –	43 –	41	53
	31 et plus sur 1 à 3	14 et plus sur ½ à 1½	48 –	46 –	44	56
	21 à 30 sur 4 à 6	10½ à 13½ sur 2 à 3	52 –	50 –	48	60
	21 à 30 sur 1 à 3	10½ à 13½ sur ½ à 1½	55 –	53 –	51	63
Bandelettes	31 et plus sur 4 à 6	14 et plus sur 2 à 3	45 –	43 –	41	53
	21 à 30 sur 4 à 6	10½ à 13½ sur 2 à 3	58 –	50 –	48	60
Fers fendus	de toutes dimensions	3e qte superieure, 14, 50	17 50	16 50	14	23 °/o livres
Tôles	de chaudières de 6 et plus	3 et plus	48 –			
	fonds, ronds et gironds	3 et plus	48 –			
	de commerce de 2 à 5	1 à 2½	52 –			
	1 à 2	½ à 1	54 –			
	en dessous de 1	en dessous ½	58 –			
	polies	,,				
Rails	selon les modèles donnés		34 –			
Fonte de Moulage 1e qte			16 –			
Id. 2e id.			15 –			
Id. 3e id.			14 –			
Fonte d'affinage, fer fort grise			14 –			
Id. id. teintée.						
Id. id. blanche.						
Fonte d'affinage, fer tendre grise			13 –			
Id. id. teintée.						
Id. id. blanche.						
Fin métal, 1ere qualité			18 –			

Les fers demandé à longueur augmentent de 2 *f.* au 100 kilog., ainsi que les pièces qui surpassent 100 kilog.
A quatre mois, ou au comptant, sous escompte de ½ p. °/o par moix, pris reçu et agrée dans nos usines.

ROLLING MILLS for converting IRON into BARS on the English system.

Bar-Iron Manufacture.

Number of these mills in 1830 - - - - - 2
Ditto - ,, - 1838 - - - - - 12
These mills are capable of converting 77,000 tons of pigs } annually.
And producing - - 55,000 tons of bar-iron }
Mills on the old system for converting charcoal pigs - - - - - 13,870 tons } annually.
And producing - - - 7,300 tons of bar-iron }

Total produce of bar-iron 62,300 tons annually.

No export.

Charcoal Iron.

Charcoal-iron is superior in quality to iron made with coke and coal, and is preferred for certain uses; but it costs dearer, and will soon be superseded by the latter in this country, as it has long been in England.

Cost Price.

Expense of making one ton of rails,—

	f.	c.
Value of pigs to make one ton of rails - -	214	75
Coals used in the operations - - - -	62	–
Puddling, shingling, heating, rolling, dressing, &c.	45	20
Repairs, general expenses, &c. - - - -	9	50
Total Expense - - - -	331	45
Sold to the Government - -	334	–
Net profit on one ton of rails -	f. 2	45 = 2s.

Selling price 334*f.* = 13*l.* 2*s.*

Price

Price of Labour in Rolling Mills. Labour.

	f.	*c.*	
Labourers per day each - -	1	80	
Boys from 12 to 16 years old -	2	–	
Stock-takers and engine-men -	2	50	
Roller and furnace-men - -	6	–	
Hammer-men - - - -	10	–	or 3*f.* per ton.

Puddling pigs - 12*f.* per ton to the country puddlers.
Ditto - - 15*f.* ,, English puddlers.
Englishmen employed in rolling-mills by the day 12*f.* 50*c.*

The quality of iron in general is inferior to the English, and it appears worse than it really is, from the slovenly way in which it is sent into the market. Workmen employed in this branch of trade are *very, very* inferior to the English workmen in point of ability and intelligence. English workmen are employed in every iron manufacture of repute on the continent: they are paid at an average of 3*l.* sterling per week. For price of Iron in Bars, *see* the Price Current of the Couillet Works.

Within the last three years, I have brought over from Staffordshire and Shropshire upwards of one hundred and twenty workmen, at the average wages of 3*l.* sterling per week. I am happy to say that, with one or two exceptions, these men have conducted themselves well, and saved HALF *their earnings.*

IRON-FOUNDERS for ENGINES and MACHINERY.

	f.	£.	*s.*
Price of pigs delivered at the works for casting	165 per ton	= 6	11
,, coke to melt with - - - - -	27 ,,		
,, workmanship by the ton { open castings -	14 } (A)		
{ flask ditto -	35 } (A)		
{ loam ditto -	55 } (A)		

	f.	*c.*	
Labourers per day -	1	80	hours of labour 6 to 6, or 10 working hours.
Common moulder -	4	–	
Good moulder - -	8	–	
An English moulder -	12	50, or 3*l.* sterling a week.	

	f.	£.
Selling price of castings: Heavy castings - -	250	= 10
Machine castings - -	300	= 12

A great many English moulders are employed in Belgium at the above wages, or upon piece-work. The prices marked (A) are the regular prices of the country; and at those prices an English moulder will earn 20*f.* a-day, whereas what is considered a good country moulder, would not be able to earn more than 5*f.* a-day, and his work would not be so perfect. I have made the experiment, and I had more profit from English workmen at 12*f.* 50*c.*, than from country workmen at 3*f.* 50*c.* English and Belgian Workmen.

BOILER MAKERS.

	f.	*c.*		£.	*s.*
Price of boiler plates delivered at the works	560	–	per ton	= 22	5
,, workmanship per ton, cylindrical boilers - - - -	115	–	,,	= 4	10

,, riveters, 3*f.* for eight yards of riveting, or 3*f.* per-day.

	f.	*c.*		
Labourers - -	1	80	per day	hours of labour 6 to 6, or 10 working hours.
English foreman -	12	50	,,	
Selling price of boilers - - -	900*f.* per ton = 35*l.* 16*s.*			

Cylindrical boilers are generally in use, because almost all the steam-engines are high pressure. The quantity of coal consumed, averages 12 lbs. per hour *per horse-power.*

Belgium.

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Engine and Machine Making.

Cockerill and others.—Average Price of the Country.

Price of labour—	*f.*	*c.*		
Boys, from 12 to 16 years old	1	–	per day.	
Common labourers	1	80	,,	
Blacksmiths, forgers	3	50	,,	
Ditto for engines	4	50	,,	
Strikers	2	–	,,	
Filers and fitters	3	–	,,	
Turners of wood and iron	3	50	,,	Hours of labour 6 to 7, or 11 working hours.
Model makers	3	50	,,	
Fitters up of engines	5	–	,,	
English machinists	12	50	,,	
Draftsmen	5	–	,,	
Foremen and overlookers	4	–	,,	
Book-keepers	5	–	,,	
Head ditto	7	–	,,	
Directors	25	–	,,	

Average Prices.

Machine makers frequently work by the piece; but it is not possible to state the conditions, as they depend upon so many and such various considerations. The above prices may be relied on, as representing the prices established in all the best shops in Verviers, Liege, Bruxelles, Charleroi, Malines and Ghent.

Workmen.

The class of workmen employed in these establishments is superior to the other classes of workmen in Belgium in point of intelligence, and I think they owe this superiority to their relations with English workmen, who have been brought over to instruct them. They are, however, in ability still very inferior to their models, *and always will be*.

Price of Engines.

Selling prices - Steam-engines, high pressure, 1,000 *f.* per horse power.
,, - - low pressure 1,250 *f.* ,,

Iron-work in general - Repairs, &c. - - 50% higher than in England.

Locomotives (Stevenson's) system, 32,000 *f.*

English Machinery.

I will give the prices of other machines in speaking of Cockerill's establishments. A great deal of machinery, of all descriptions, is imported from England; and if the law for prohibiting the exportation of machinery were abolished, I do not think there would be a machine-making establishment on the continent; for, notwithstanding the high price of smuggling out machines, they are still cheap, when compared with the best machine ever made on this side of the water.

Causes of Increase.

Every branch of trade connected with the iron manufacture, has increased since the Revolution in an extraordinary ratio. I will briefly explain the causes of this increase.

Revolution.

Belgium was in a most healthy and prosperous state when overtaken by the Revolution. She had the entire use and advantage of Dutch enterprize and capital; she had the Dutch settlements and Holland for her bankers, consumers and customers. Protected and aided by the king and the government, who understood and directed her commerce and industry, she was daily growing in strength, and would soon have been a powerful and redoubtable rival to the English manufacturer in every foreign market. The Revolution, and consequent separation from Holland, knocked her prosperity on the head, deprived her of every resource as a manufacturing nation, and left her hampered with a large working population crying for bread.

Separation from Holland.

Public Feeling.

When the revolutionists no longer feared a restoration, and the orangeists had lost their courage and their hopes, something like order was restored, and the reasonable of both parties began to reflect upon the situation and future prospects

spects of the country, and plans and schemes were agitated for restoring confidence and creating or opening new sources of trade and commerce. The cotton trade of Ghent was annihilated, and the commerce of Antwerp was buried in the ruins of her entrepôt. These losses were irrecoverable, but they might be compensated, and the new government did all it could do to aid and assist the efforts of individuals. The cotton-spinners were assisted with loans; the woollen-cloth manufacturers were kept going by army contracts, for clothing and forced smuggling to Holland, cloth prejudice being stronger with a Dutchman than political hatred. The manufacturers of arms received large foreign orders about the same time. The construction of railways was another and successful means of encouraging trade, and giving employment; but the establishment of the bank of Belgium was that which gave the best impulse to particular enterprize, by restoring confidence and credit. Trade.

In this way, trade and commerce were progressing slowly and surely until 1834, when the directors of the two principal banks of Bruxelles went mad, and immediately all their friends and acquaintance became afflicted with the same malady. In a few weeks, not a village, a hamlet or a family, but was suffering from the disease. Every body was *society mad*, and '*Sociétés Anonymes*' were got up for every species of industry. By trickery and fraud, shares were quoted at double their original price; large fortunes were realized by a sort of legerdemain, and money could be obtained in superabundance in aid of any speculation, however wild or ridiculous. Public Companies.

The proprietors of coal-mines, who were suffering very much from the effects of the Revolution, were the first to enjoy the sunshine of that eternal summer of prosperity which had commenced for Belgium. Coal-mines were the first objects of speculation, and their value was sextupled in a few days. To increase the consumption of coal, and at the same time give a stimulus to the iron trade, blast furnaces and rolling-mills were put into construction, and these constructions again rendered engine and machine making establishments absolutely necessary. To these Societies were added a great number of others and large establishments for divers branches of manufactures were built in all parts of the country. Speculations.

The measure of coals got up from two francs to six francs, and mineral for smelting got up in a much greater ratio: in these districts land was doubled in value, and rent and labour in the same proportion: thus, in less than two years, things were forced from their natural level, and production was monstrous and out of all proportion. Increased Value.

The object of the promoters of these Societies was obtained; they had gained immense wealth, and they had made haste to do it: there had been no spare, no economy, no foresight; no prudent calculations of cost to ensure future profit and successful trade: all was waste, extravagance and peculation. The most profligate transactions, the most infamous frauds, the vilest thefts, were known, admitted and joked upon. Scandalous transactions.

Such are the causes of the extraordinary increase of some of the branches of trade since the Revolution; but that increase is only momentary, at least the greater part of it. The bank of Belgium has failed; the ancient bank, directed by M. Meeus, has been obliged to withdraw its support from the societies established under its patronage, and Cockerill has suspended his payments. Consequences.

Morals, &c., of the Working Class.

Wages have increased since the French Revolution all over the continent, and, with partial exceptions, in every branch of manufacture: the consequence has been, as it probably always will be, *less sobriety*. High wages increasing sobriety is a contradiction well known to all those who employ many workmen: men will not work hard any longer than it is necessary to satisfy certain wants; and the less they work, the more they amuse themselves. There are, I know, many exceptions to this rule in England, where a sense of religion is a restraint Morals of Workmen.

Belgium.

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and a reason to tens of thousands, but this is not the case on the continent, where a principle of economy is the only motive for sobriety. I have observed that workmen in all countries become vitiated in their habits and morals, when the price of their labour is paid in excess; that is, when a man can earn as much in three days as he requires for the week, and especially when this excess of price be an *accident* of the trade, and not in the regular order of things.

Rate of Wages.

There is great injustice and irregularity in the way workmen are remunerated for their labour, but it is inevitable, and can neither be controlled or regularized. A poor weaver works 16 hours a day for 1*s.* 6*d.*; a joiner works 12 hours for 3*s.*, whilst the machinist will not work more than 10 hours for 5*s.*: but they are brought up to this, and their habits and expenses are regulated by it; the machinist does not understand economy, because he does not need it, and the weaver becomes a perfect economist from practice and necessity, enjoying as many real comforts as the other, because he has no extra wants, and has learnt to manage his means. I have made these remarks, because I have observed that men are neither so comfortable in their circumstances and their families, when any ebullition of trade has enabled them to earn more than usual, or than is

Habits of Living.

necessary, according to their established habits of living. In France, during the empire, workmen were scarce, and wages high; the consequence was, that masters were in subjection to their servants, and obliged to shut their eyes and ears against the insolence and insobriety of those they fed. The working class employed in the cloth manufactories in the Pays de Liege are the cleanest, soberest, and most orderly people that I have found on the continent. They gain as little, if not less than any other class of work-people in the country, but their habits are formed to hard work and severe economy, and they have no excess to tempt them from their duty to their employers and their families. There is in that part of the country a great deal of what is called "bigotry;" but

Cloth-makers.

if it operate at all, it is in favour of good order and dutiful behaviour; it was far otherwise, however, in the time of Napoleon, when trade was extremely flourishing, and hands were scarce; then was the reign there, as elsewhere, of insolence and drunkenness. Wages have increased, and will increase; but, depend upon it, morality will not follow in the same ratio.

Change of condition, and habits and opinion.

A great change is operating in the minds of the working classes on the continent, and I think it is important to notice it here. They are just and only now beginning to speculate and reason upon their own *importance*; they are getting our "club-union" notions into their heads, and are daily becoming not better workmen, but more discontented and difficult to please. A little learning is making them as mad as some of our demagogues of trade, and, in learning to read, they have learned to reason. The prices of labour on the continent and in England are becoming more equal, and will soon be on a par, or nearly so. Provisions and rents are much dearer within the last three or four years than they were previously: the people live better, and dress better than they used to do. These changes are positive and perceptible, and I think they are operating to the advantage of England, who, at an equal rate of wages, has nothing to fear from rivals in a foreign market.

School System.

"*La loi de l'enseignment libre*" is the only change that has taken place in the school system since the Revolution, and this law has no effect either in retarding or advancing instruction.

The education of the children of the poor is provided for by the law, and schools exist in every commune or parish; but the principle is not popular, or in favour with the *noblesse* and the clergy. No one takes an interest in the thing, not even the priest; and if it were not for the respectable class of manufacturers inhabiting towns, it would soon be got rid of as a nuisance.

There is also a want of something on the part of the poor themselves, and I think it is, that they are too ignorant to appreciate the value of a little useful knowledge. They cannot value that which they do not understand, and they have never been taught by their superiors to consider ignorance a crime. I do not say that this ignorance is a fault of their religion, I do not think it is. I think the fault may have been, and still may be, charged upon the noblesse, who are very numerous in Belgium, and were, and still are, in general, as ignorant as

as their peasantry. I have had at different times, and in various parts of Belgium, more than twenty thousand workmen under my control, and I am confident that not five per cent. of them could read and write. In the small towns and villages, the superstition and ignorance of the people is amazing; their faculties are locked up and benumbed for want of being called into exercise. Things, however, in this respect, are improving, and I have no doubt that the rising generation will show fruit. The employment of German and English workmen has done much good. The establishment of manufactories will break up the sleepy, stupid system of domestic manufacture, an unsocial system, shutting up the body, leaving the light of the mind to go out. The establishment of large manufactories may not improve morals, but it will systematise trade, increase wages, open men's minds, and be a blessing to the whole country.

Education.

Cockerill's Establishments for engine and machine making, do not differ from the other establishments in Belgium for the same purposes, except in having better tools and better workmen: this was the case at least up to 1837. There are at present several establishments for engineering, having as good workmen, and better tools.

He has two principal establishments, one at Seraing, and one at Liege. Seraing contains within its walls four coal-pits, two blast furnaces, rolling-mills capable of making 200 tons of bar-iron per week, extensive forges, and shops with 200 laithes, for making locomotives, engines and machinery of any description.

Seraing.

All the best tools came from England, as well as the models of the engines, &c. made here. Upwards of 1,500 hands are constantly employed in these works, of which 800 are in the engine making department. The prices of labour as given under the head of "Engine and Machine making."

Great numbers of English workmen have been brought here at various times; but the policy has always been to get rid of them by any means, the moment their secret has been learned

The capital engaged in this establishment since its commencement in 1817, amounts to 900,000*l.* sterling, of which 500,000*l.* *are sunk.* He suspended his payments three days ago, and his debit is 15 millions of francs; his credit is *said* to be 18 millions; great exertions are making to obtain for him a loan from the government.

The quality of the work done at Seraing used to be the best on the continent. The machines are exported to all parts of the world; they are inferior to English machines, and the price of them is 10 to 20 per cent. higher. This preference in the foreign market is to be attributed to his connexion with the King of Holland, who obtained for him the favour of several foreign governments, particularly Prussia and Russia.

The establishment at Liege is appropriated to the construction of small machines, such as cotton, worsted, flax and woollen machinery; 400 hands are employed in this work; the prices of labour are given in the following page. The tools are not so good as are found in all the machine shops of Manchester and Leeds. The models are made from machines brought from England for that purpose, but the copy is always *very, very* inferior to the model. Almost all the machines made here are exported to different parts of Europe. His conditions of sale for export are, one-third of the amount when he receives the order, one-third when the machines are delivered at Antwerp, and one-third two months after. His prices for machines vary frequently; those given in the following page are his latest, and they average 20 °/₀ higher than the English prices.

Establishment at Liege.

Cockerill's machines are the best that are made on the continent; but, as I have before said, they are very inferior to English made machines, particularly roving frames, mule jennies and throstles for spinning cotton, worsted and flax. The best machine ever made here will require nearly double the power, will make double

Comparison of Machinery.

Belgium.

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double the waste, and will turn off 20 °/₀ less in a given time than a machine of the same number of spindles made at Manchester: I have proved this at various times and in *different countries*; in France, in Holland, in Prussia and in Belgium. When the English Government permit the exportation of machines, foreign machine-makers may shut up their establishments.

Cockerill's Prices of Machines.

Steam-engines up to,—	*f.*	
20 horses' power, high pressure	1,000 per h. p.	These prices are subject to circumstances, but they are the *lowest* prices.
,, low pressure	1,250 ,,	
20, and upwards, high pressure	900 ,,	
,, low pressure	1,100 ,,	

	f.
An 80 h. p. low-pressure blast engine, which he put up at Chatlineau, with dry reservoir, &c., all complete, putting up, and every expense included	*F.* 133,000. £. 5,300.
Present price of locomotives sold to Government	*F.* 32,000.
nearly	£. 1,250.

Boilers, cylindrical, 900*f.* per ton.
Mill-work according to contract, but average 40 °/₀ higher than in England.

Worsted machinery,—	*f.*	
Preparers	400	per spindle.
Roving heads	260	,,
Throstles	36	,, best throstles at £. 1. 8. !!! Bradford, 15*s.* a spindle.
Card-combing machine complete	11,000 £. 435.	In England £. 240.

	f.	
Cotton - mule jennies	16	per spindle to 22*f.* per spindle.
,, carding engines	800 to 1,200	each engine.
,, throstles, cotton	25	per spindle.
Power-looms	500 to 700	each loom.
Flax - carding engines for tow	3,400	each.
,, cards	1,400	,,
,, drawing heads, 4 boxes	1,500	,,
,, roving frames	600	per spindle.
,, throstles	46	,,

Cloth machinery—	*f.*	
,, carding engines	800	each engine. Very old-fashioned carding engines are used in the cloth trade.
,, Lewis's shearing machine	900	
,, English gig-mill	1,200	
,, ditto, brushing and operating	3,000	

Mule jennies for spinning woollen yarns, 12*f.* per spindle.—[*See* the list of prices of a machine maker at Dison.]

Cockerill's Prices.—(Received Feb. 16, 1839.)

Prix Courant de Machines pour la Filature de Laine peignée, de Charles, James, et John Cockerill, à Liége.

Système Anglais.

	f.
1 briseur ventilateur (devil)	1,050
1 machine à laver (wool-washing machine)	1,300
1 ,, peigner, avec garniture de cardes (combing machine)	11,000
1 defeutreur à vis (breaking machine)	1,200
1 machine à chauffer (hot machine)	3,100

Système Anglais—continued.

	f.
1 etirage à la vapeur (hot machine)	3,900
1 „ 1 broche (preparing heads, 1 spindle)	700
1 „ 2 „ „ 2 „	900
1 „ 4 „ „ 4 „	1,350
1 „ „ „ „ 8 „	1,400
1 conténu à 128 broches, à 36 *f.* la broche (throstles)	4,608
1 machine à doubler, à 108 broches, à 20 *f.* par broche (doubling throstles)	2,160
1 devidoir (reel)	300
1 presse à paquet (bundling press)	700
1 peigneur Collier (combing machine by Collier)	8,000

Système Français.

1 defeutreur (breaker)	1,100
1 petit tambour à 2 lames de peignes (breaker)	1,200
1 grand „ 4 „ „ „	1,500
1 réduit et réunion (doubling and drawing head)	1,800
1 etirage à 7 têtes (7 heads of ditto)	3,800
1 bobinoir à 12 bobines	2,300
1 „ 14 „	2,800
1 „ 16 „	3,000
Mule jenny à 180 broches, par broche, 22 *f.*	
1 presse à paquets	700
1 devidoir	300

The whole of these prices average 50 per % more than the English prices.—*G. W.*

Pour Filature de Coton (Cotton Machinery).

	f.
1 loup (devil)	850
1 batteur étaleur (beater and spreader)	1,800
1 „ éplucheur „ „	1,800
Cardes, suivant les modèles de carding engines 800 *f.* à	1,200
1 machine à réunir (doubling engine)	850
1 etirage de 3, 4, ou 5 têtes doubles (drawing engine) par têtes doubles	350
1 banc à broches, en gros de 24 broches (roving engine) la broche	95
1 „ à pression „	100
1 „ en fin de 40 broches „	70
1 „ à pression „	75
Les bancs à broches sont à mouvement perfectionné, et les broches murs par engrenages.	
Si l'on demande plus ou moins de broches que les nombres indiqués, le prix sera reglé en conséquence.	
Mule jennies, suivant le nombre de broches la broche, de 9½ *f.* à	11
Conténus de 144 broches, plus ou moins (throstles) par broche	20
„ dernier modèle perfectionné	22
1 devidoir pour fil de mule jenny	400
1 „ „ contenu	450
1 presse à paquets en cuivre	700
Ces prix s'entendent pour les machines prises à Liége. Les pièce supplémentaires et de rechange, ainsi que les frais d'emballage, n'y sont pas compris, mais seront facturés séparament, préalables au comptoir.	

Conditions de Payement.

⅓ à la commande;
⅓ à l'expédition;
⅓ six mois après l'expédition;
en papier à deux mois, de date sur Paris, ou toute autre grande place de change, au cours du jour.

Various Notes, Prices of Labour, &c.

Wages of man-servant or footman,	in the country	*f.* 350 per year.
„	Liege, Brussels, Antwerp	500 „
„ maid-servant, house-maid,	country	80 „
„	Brussels, Liege	100 „
„ cook-maid	country	140 „
„	Brussels	180 „

Belgium.

Appendix to Foreign Report from *J. C. Symons*, Esq.

	f.	*c.*	
Bricklayers' labourers - - - - - - - -	1	80	
Bricklayer - - - - - - - - - -	2	–	
Ditto - by the piece, or - - - - - - -	2	50	cubic yard.
Ditto - furnishing bricks and mortar, and labour, Charleroi	12	50	,,
Ditto - - - - - - - - - Brussels	15	50	,,
Brickmaker: he will furnish all the labour of getting clay, and making, &c. - - - - - - - - - -	2	–	per 1,000

When people have clay-land, they make their own bricks for building. I had more than 30 millions made in the neighbourhood of Charleroi; cost me 5*f.* 10*c.* per 1,000.

Selling price of bricks at Charleroi, 8*f.* per 1,000; Brussels, 10*f.* per 1,000.

These bricks are certainly very inferior to the English bricks, but they improve by exposure to the air. Buildings for engines, &c. require to be 1 ½ brick thicker than with English bricks.

House-carpenter - - - - - -	2*f.* 50*c.* per day.
Slaters, plasterers, painters - - - -	2*f.* 50*c.* ,,

Mr. Symons complains of the very discrepant accounts he has received of the prices of labour; and so there is a real discrepancy in the wages paid by Mr. Cockerill, and every body else who employs a great number of workmen. I have employed a number of forgers in the same forge, whose wages varied from 2*f.* 50*c.* per day, to 15*f.* a day, and so it is in every other department of labour; and be assured that the 15*f.* man is always the cheapest. There is not a forger in Belgium who is worth more than 6*f.* a day; but there are thousands in England worth, on the continent, 15*f.* a day. No country will produce good workmen who have not apprentice laws, and a population who have the habit of obeying those laws as we do in England. Seven years is a long and severe chastner to young and giddy minds, but it is an excellent process for changing boys into men, and they have all the advantage of it. From the first hour of a boy's apprenticeship he is required to do a maximum quantity of work, and to do it well, though it be only to rub rust from old iron. On the continent there are no apprentices, no restraint, and no good workmen; the best of them are poor tools.

Apprentices.

Glass Blowing.

There are a great many glass-blowing establishments in the neighbourhood of Namur, Charleroi and Mons; some of them the property of individuals, others belonging to public companies.

When coals were cheap, they were doing well; but for the last two years they have been working without profit. They export a great deal to Italy and America.

	f.	*c.*		*s.*	*d.*
Price of labour:—Boys - - - - -	–	60	per day =	–	5 ¾
Labourers - - - -	1	80	,, =	1	5 ¼
Young men, aid to blower	2	20	,, =	1	9

Glass-blower: bottles, 2*f.* 50*c.* per 100; window glass, 4*f.* 20*c.* per 100 square feet.

A blower will make 400 bottles in a turn, and 250 square feet of glass, out of which he pays his boy 60*c.*, and his young man 2*f.* 20*c.*, which will leave him full 7*f.* a day, which is about their average gain.

Selling price of glass at the manufactory,—

	f.			£.	*s.*	*d.*
1st quality of white glass -	28	per 100 square feet	=	1	2	–
2d ,, ,, - -	21	,, ,,	=	–	16	5
Common glass - - -	30	per 200 ,,				
1st quality of bottles - -	14	the 100 bottles -	=	–	–	1 ¼ each

Paper Mills.

There are paper-mills in all parts of Belgium; the largest and best is that belonging to Cockerill, at Andenne, six leagues from Namur or Liege.

Price

Price of labour at Andenne:	*f.*	*c.*	
Girls for sorters, under 12 years - -	–	50	per day.
Women ditto - - - - -	1	–	,,
Paper machine men - - - -	3	–	,,
Pulp - ditto - - - - -	2	50	,,
Bleachers - ditto - - - -	1	80	,,
Labourers - ditto - - - -	1	60	,,
Girls to sort and clean rags - - -	–	80	,,
Forewoman - - - - -	1	50	,,
Englishman overlooker - - - -	10	–	,,
Under book-keeper - - - -	5	–	,,
Head - ditto - - - -	14	–	,,

Price of good linen rags, 20*f.* per 100lbs. English.

Selling price of paper: Impression paper weighing 26lbs. per ream, 15*f.* 50*c.* per ream.

Cotton Printing at Andenne.

This establishment, quite complete for printing 100 pieces per day, is shut up. A great deal of money has been sunk here, through Cockerill's foolish conduct.

Miscellaneous Returns—(*Sent by the same gentleman.*)

Questions.	Réponses.
1°. Combien d'ouvriers y a-t-il employé dans la filature de laine peignée en Belgique.	Nous ne connoissons en Belgique que 8 à 10 filatures de laine peignée, dont 2 à Verviers, 2 à Liege, 1 à Bruxelles, et 2 ou 3 à Tournay. Cette industrie est *peu* de chose, et n'occupe guère qu'un millier d'ouvriers. Il se peigne et se file, neanmoins, encore beaucoup de laine à la main, principalement pour la bonneterie dans plusieurs parties de la Belgique, entre autres dans le Hainaut, dans la Camfine, dans la province de Liège, etc. Cela a, cependant, beaucoup diminué, et finira probablement par être entièrement remplacé par la filature mécanique. Malgré cela, nous ne croyons pas que celle-ci soit susceptible d'un grand développement en Belgique; en tout cas, elle se bornera toujours à la consommation intérieure, attendu qu'elle ne pourra jamais lutter sur d'autres marchés, et à armes égales avec l'industrie Anglaise, qui a des avantages trop grandes, tels que le bon marché du combustible, la grandeur de ses exploitations, la possession chez elle des laines longues, le grand nombre et la bonté de ses peigneurs, etc. etc. Elle ne parviendra pas, non plus, à lutter contre l'industrie Française et Saxonne pour la filature, et la fabrication des laines peignées fines: c'est, du moins, notre opinion.
2°. Combien d'ouvriers y a-t-il employé dans le tissage des étoffes de laine peignée?	Le tissage des étoffes de laine peignées est encore plus dans son enfance en Belgique; il se peut que les nouveaux droits qui ont été établis récemment, lui feront prendre de l'essor; mais il faut du temps pour cela. Nous savons que plusieurs fabricans font des essais.
3°, 4°, 5° et 7°. Qu'elles sont les heures de travail?	Nous ne pouvons donner que les journées que nos ouvriers gagnent, mais nous croyons que c'est, à peu de chose, près la même chose dans toute la Belgique, où il se trouve beaucoup de fabriques.

Belgium.

Appendix to Foreign Report from *J. C. Symons*, Esq.

Questions.	Réponses.
Les prix des journées des différens ouvriers dans ces branches?	Les fileurs de coton, ou de laine, gagnent généralement de 2 à 3*f.* par jour de 12 heures, selon leur dextérité; les tisserands de drap 1½*f.* à 2½*f.*
Combien sont payé les ouvriers limeurs, forgerons, tourneurs et manœuvres et les heures de travail?	A leur force, les manœuvriers, soit les laineurs, les débourreurs de cardes de coton, les maçons, etc., gagnent vers 1½*f.* par jour; les filles et femmes, telles que noffeuses, divideuses, soigneures d'etirages de coton, etc., de 75*c.* à 1*f.*; les plus jeunes filles, telles que les fileuses, 50*c.* à 80*c.*; les limeurs et ajouteures ont ordinairement de 2*f.* à 3*f.*, les forgerons et tourneurs de 3*f.* à 5*f.* Les heures de travail sont de 12 à 14 heures par jour.
5° Le nombre de *power-looms* en Belgique, et le prix de tissage?	Nous croyons qu'il n'y a pas plus de 3,000 *power-looms* en Belgique. Vous pourriez le savoir plus exactement à Gand, et vous informer combien on paye maintenant pour le tissage. Nous croyons que c'est vers 1*f.* 70 *c.* pour 50 à 56 aunes de Brabant calicot ⅝, 2,400 fils de chaine No. 30, avec 17 à 18 fils de trame, No. 36, au quart de pouce; la même qualité, lissée à la main, se paye à Gand, si nous ne nous trompons, vers 3*f.* 50 *c.* pour la même longueur.
6° Combein vous coute la confection d'un kilog. de filature laine peignée à la main, en main d'œuvre, soit No. 40, fait avec super matching? Les mêmes questions pour un kilog. coton No. 20, avec le coton Georgie?	Le coût de la filature de laine peignée, et de coton, dépend tout-à-fait de la localité où la filature est faite; à Gand, où le combustible est moins cher, et où les ouvriers sont plus nombreux et plus habils, le kilog. de fil de coton coute moins qu'ici. Voici du reste: comme nous comptons que le kilog. de filature de coton No. 20, nous revient à notre établissement. Coton Georgie acheté à 1*f.* 63 *c.*, avec 10 °/₀ de perte à la filature:

	f.	*c.*
Coute - - - -	1	85
Main d'œuvre - - -	–	38
Combustible - - -	–	13
Frais généraux - - -	–	42
	2	78

À Gand cela ne leur coute pas autant.

Les prix des fils de coton en Angleterre sont toujours de 20 à 25 °/₀ moins chers que les notres.

Quant au coût du kilog. de fil de laine peignée à la main, nous ne pouvons vous le donner; vous savez que le peignage à la main n'est pas notre branche, et que nous ne sommes pas montés pour cela. Nous comptons que le peignage à la machine, et la filature, tout compris, nous revient vers 5*c.* l'echeveau de 560 *yards*; vous savez que nous filons de 10 à 40.

8° Les ouvriers reçoivent-ils une education, et comment, ainsi que leur condition morale, et est-elle améliorée depuis la Revolution?	Vous deviez connoitre maintenant les ouvriers de notre pays aussi bien que nous. Vous savez que nos ouvriers sont en général foibles de constitutions, mal nourris, qu'ils sont d'un caractère assez doux, que leur moralité est passable, et, qu'en definitive, nous pourrions être plus mal

avec

Questions.	Réponses.
	avec eux que nous le sommes, et que nous ne pouvons nous plaindre qu'ils soient difficiles et méchants. Quant à leur éducation, elle s'est considérablement ameliorée depuis la Revolution : la génération change à vue d'œil, et cela est uniquement à attribuer aux écoles gardiennes (*infant schools*), et à l'instruction gratuite que leur donnent les frères de la doctrine Chrétienne, et les sœurs religieuses, qui est non seulement une instruction mécanique bien entendue, mais une instruction morale et religieuse, qui ne laisse rien à desirer. Tout le monde le reconnait maintenant : il y a, peut-être, 1,500 enfans qui profitent maintenant à Viviers de cette instruction.
9° Les prix de savon, charbon et huile ?	Le savon qui sert à fouler les draps, et que nous employons pour dégraisser nos laines, nous coute 1 *f.* le kilog : il est fait au Suif. L'huile d'olive nous coute maintenant 1 *f.* 15 *c.*, et l'huile epuissé pour quinquet 1 *f.* le kilogramme. Le charbon que nous employons pour nos machines à vapeur, coute à Liege 1 *f.* 44 *c.* les 100 kilogs., qui, avec 1 *f.* 20 *c.* de transport, nous revient ici à 2 *f.* 64 *c.* les 100 kilogs. ; c'est environ quartre fois autant qu'il coute au fabricant de Manchester ou de Leeds ! !

Le droit d'entrée récemment établis sur le fil de laine peignée est de 45 *f.* les 100 kilogs. sur le fil simple, et 60 *f.* sur le fil degraissé, cru ou teint. Nous ne pouvons savoir quel sont les renseignemens que vous desiriez avoir sur le zinc ; faits nous de questions, et nous tacherons d'y satisfaire.

List of Prices of a Machine-maker at Dison.

The machines used in the cloth trade here are most of them very old in principle, and equally old in the manner of making them. A better taste is obtaining ; they are beginning to use English machines.

Prix aux Diverses Machines propres pour la Fabrication des Draps ; savoir,—

	f.
Un brisoire (devil)	350
Une crasse (2d ditto)	640
Un battoire (batter)	400
Une garde à pointe, nouvellement inventée par moi, selon brevet, mais qui est en retard par suite des évenemens actuels (card, with cock-spur teeth)	2,000
Une dreussette (1st card engine)	750
Une garde, mais non couverte (2d card engine)	750
Un moulin gros (billy of 40 spindles)	400
Un moulin fin (spinning jenny, with 60 spindles)	200
Un dévidoire (reel)	50
Une machine à lainer Anglaise, avec tambour garni en carte de bois (gig)	800
Une machine à lainer, avec tambour en fer	800
Une brosse à nettoyer les chardons, avec accessoires très bonnes	400
Et plus moindre à convenir suivant la qualité des soies.	
Une tondeuse Anglaise (Lewis' shearing machine)	850
Un dégorgeoir à rouleaux	850
Une brosseuse, avec douze brosses (brush)	300
Une machine à décatir	600
Et pour la machine à opérer, je vous ferai connaître le prix ensuite de la décision de votre ami.	

Belgium.

Appendix to Foreign Report from *J. C. Symons*, Esq.

Charleroi, le 7 Fevrier 1839.

J'ai fait toutes les courses nécessaires pour me procurer les renseignemens que vous me demandez par votre dernière ; savoir,

		f.	*c.*	
1°	Prix du charbon en 1820 -	2	–	les 400 kil. ou la brouette.
2°	id. journée d'ouvrier mineur -	1	10	pour 10 heures de travail.
3°	Prix du charbon en 1830 -	3	–	les 400 k. ou la brouette.
4°	id. journée d'ouvrier - -	1	20	pour 10 heures de travail.
5°	id. du charbon en 1837 -	6	–	pour 600 kils.
	id. journée d'ouvrier - -	2	–	pour 6 heures de travail.
6°	1re qualité verre blanc - -	28	–	la caisse, contenant cent pied quarré.
7°	2me qualité id. - - -	21	–	idem.
8°	1re qualité verre commun -	30	–	la caisse, contenant deux cent pied quarré.
9°	1re qualité de bouteille -	14	–	le cent.

Le 1re haut fourneau du hauché fut construit en 1821 ; c'est un petit fourneau, avec lequel ils ont fait des essais.

Votre devoué.

Gand, le 7 Fevrier 1839.

Je m'empresse à vous transmettre ci-bas la réponse aux 6 questions que vous m'avez soumises, vous offrant en même temps mon ministère pour tout ce qui pourrait vous interesser sur notre place, même les environs.

J'ai toujours les cardes de la maison de Liège, que je vends à mon propre compte. Si vous pouviez m'en faire placer chez vous, je suis à même de fournir de suite 30 à 40 garnitures completes en No. 20, 22 et 24, 1ere qualités.

Constamment à votres ordres, je vous prie de presenter mes respects à madame votre épouse, et à votre chère demoiselle, et agréez mes sincères salutations.

1ere question. Réponse.—Le prix du charbon est de 8*f.* 75*c.* pour 1,000 poids de Gand, rendue à la maison.—*N. B.* 100kils. font 230 poids de Gand.

2me question. (R.)—Les filles 6 à 14*f.*, et les hommes 12 à 17*f.* par jour.

3me question. (R.)—Passe les 3,000 metières.

4me question. Les tisserands sont payés par coupe de 105 à 110 aunes.

	f.
2,400 $\frac{5}{4}$ à - - - - - - - -	3
3,000 „ „ - - - - - - - -	5

5me question. (R.)—On compte les journées par 12 heures de travail ; quand on travaille d'avantage, on bénéfice l'ouvrier.

6me question. (R.)—Elle a diminuée, mais on travaille plus long temps que 12 heures dans les filatures.

Tournay, 9 Fevrier, 1839.

Je suis en possession de votre estimée du 20 : voici les renseignemens que j'ai pu me procurer.

	f.	*c.*		*f.*	*c.*	
L'hectolitre de charbon menu	1	–	=	20	–	les 1,000 kilog.
„ menu gailleteux -	1	15	=	23	–	„
		20				
	2	35				

Le

	f.	*c.*		*f.*	*c.*
Le prix de journée d'ouvrière est de	–	72	à	–	81
,, journée d'homme est de	1	–	à	1	50

Façon d'une paire bas coton, moyenne qualité, pour femme, 45*c.*

La grande industrie de Tournay est la bonneterie.

Nous avons aussi plusieurs fabriques d'étoffe, genre de Roubaix (dans les qualités communes.) Les preparations se font en fabrique. Les tisserands travaillent chez eux ; ils sont tous des frontières de France.

Si je puis être de quelque utilité à vous ou votre ami, je suis entièrement à vos ordres.

Explanations, &c.

The prices of labour, &c. are calculated in francs and centimes of 25*f.* 25*c.* to a pound sterling. In speaking of weights, I have, for simplicity's sake, used the pounds and ton English.

Small wares are sold by the kilogramme, and heavy wares, coals, iron, &c. by the 1,000 kilogrammes, which are nearly a ton ; I have allowed for the difference. In the notice on rolling-mills, I forgot to give a reduced price of iron in English money ; I add it here : I send you, besides, the price-current of the largest works on the continent, which I have put up since 1835. The whole of the engines, rolls and machinery for this large concern, I brought from Staffordshire : value in England, 40,000*l.*

Price of Iron.

	1st Quality.	2d Quality.	3d Quality.
Inch.	*f.* *c.*	*f.* *c.*	*f.* *c.*
1 $\frac{1}{4}$ × $\frac{3}{8}$ bars	380 –	360 –	330 – } per ton.
	£. 15 2 –	£. 14 5 6	£. 13 2 – }
$\frac{1}{2}$ × $\frac{3}{8}$,,	400 –	380 –	350 – } per ton.
	£. 15 18 –	£. 15 2 –	£. 13 18 – }
$\frac{3}{8}$ square, round	420 –	400 –	380 – } per ton.
	£. 16 12 –	£. 15 18 –	£. 15 2 – }
1 × $\frac{3}{16}$ Hoops	520 –	500 –	480 – } per ton.
	£. 20 11 –	£. 19 15 –	£. 19 – – }
Rails	334 –	} Cash price at the Works.	
	£. 13 4 6		
Nail rods	– – – –	350 –	
		£. 13 17 –	

Moral Condition, &c.

" What is the moral condition of the labouring classes," is a question which I find great difficulty in replying to. I know, or rather feel, what is their condition, because I am every day amongst them ; but I hardly know how to express my knowledge of their condition so as to be understood.

The people have no very remarkable qualities by which to distinguish them ; they have all the vices of their caste, mitigated or restrained in some degree by the extreme scantiness of their means of indulgence. There are no poor-laws to encourage dissolute habits, by giving security for bed and board in time of need : they have nought to depend upon but their own exertions, frugality and forecast, to keep them from immediate want and positive starvation : they know this from experience, and the practice of it from habit has become easy. Coarse bread and vegetables, soup-maigre and dirty water, called ' coffee,' is the eternal diet of the poor labouring classes in general. Their lodging resembles their living, and a bundle of straw keeps hard lying in good humour with hard living. It is a life of extreme privation and misery ; and if it were not habitual, would be intolerable.

With respect to their minds, they are all as ignorant as human beings well may be, who have eyes to see and ears to hear : they receive no religious instruction except their catechism. Not one of them ever heard of such things as

the Bible and Testament. They go to mass once a week and on fast-days; they go to confess their follies, not their vices and their crimes; they deceive the priest; absolution is obtained by penitences without repentance, and outward practice supersedes the fear and love of God in the heart.

They are as superstitious as ignorance can make them; they believe most devoutly in all the saints, and have a becoming awe of the devil; they have a profound respect for Monsieur le Curé, and are very ready to yield obedience when he neither interferes with their pleasures or their interests; they keep *not* holy the Sabbath-day, but smoke, swear, drink and play at cards from mass till night, if they can afford it. They will lye in all cases of necessity, and swear to it with as much consistency as a bourgeois, failings which they have copied from what is called "*Les gens comme il faut.*"

They are good fathers and good husbands, and this arises, I think, from being in general under petticoat government. The women are good wives and tender mothers, economical in their household, and cleanly. The children are dutiful and obedient, as all children are, according to the conduct and virtues of their parents. In some, the working classes fulfil the duties of life, as far as they know them, in a way to fear little from the reproaches of man, and to hope for the indulgence of Heaven.

Such is the moral condition, which must be considered with the religious condition of the working classes in Belgium. They are ignorant and superstitious, and they believe and follow their religion as far as they know it. They are sober and frugal from habit and necessity; their amusements are simple, boisterous, and sometimes brutal; they lie, and swear and fight, and their conversation is neither remarkable for good taste or decency.

A change is taking place in the moral condition of the working classes, and that is not for the better. It is already perceptible in the rising generation, and in the great increase of beer breweries and gin distilleries. Most of the young men can read. The collision of large manufactories has in some measure polished their wits. They reason loudly on things which their fathers never dreamed of. They dress better, drink more, and swear in French, instead of Patois. They no longer fear the curé, but treat him with disrespect. They go to mass rarely, and confess for a joke.

These *improvements* in the condition of the lower classes are going on at a railway speed; and unless checked or counteracted by some more powerful and saving principle, they will inevitably lead, and very soon, to deplorable consequences. The root of the evil lies not with the poor, but with the corrupt, depraved and, misnamed, *better* classes.

East of Scotland.

REPORT from J. D. Harding, Esq., ll.d., on the East of *Scotland*.*

To Nassau William Senior, Samuel Jones Loyd, William Edward Hickson, and John Leslie, Esquires, Her Majesty's Commissioners for inquiring into the Condition of the Hand-loom Weavers in the United Kingdom.

East of Scotland.

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Gentlemen,

In thus attempting to fulfil your instructions, I have thought it advisable to commence by giving some account of the method in which the inquiry was conducted in this district, and of the measures taken by me to ascertain the necessary facts, since upon this the value of my Report must most materially depend.

Method of conducting the Inquiry.

In those places which contained a large number of weavers, the first step taken was the giving public notice (generally by means of a letter to the chief magistrate of the town) of the day and hour at which the Assistant Commissioner would attend, which was accompanied with a request that the weavers, and in most cases that the manufacturers, would select some witnesses from their respective classes,—a request which was almost always complied with. Where the number of manufacturers or agents was very limited, summonses were sent either to all or to the principal persons amongst them, requesting their attendance at the same time and place as the weavers' witnesses. The manufacturers or agents were in all cases examined first, and then the weavers' witnesses, and sometimes a few weavers, were summoned and examined in addition to those selected by the body. Notice was then given, that if any other person wished to give evidence, the Assistant Commissioner was ready to hear them. Leading questions were carefully avoided; and the examinations were, excepting in one or two very small places, taken in public. After they had terminated, the books of some of the principal manufacturers were generally examined, for the purpose of ascertaining as accurately as possible the rate of wages paid to the weavers. The cottages, loom-shops and factories were inspected; schools occasionally visited and examined; and private inquiries made in various quarters, with a view of testing the accuracy of the evidence previously given. It was not at first thought necessary to administer an oath to the witnesses; but in consequence of its appearing that there existed, in at least one town, a reluctance on the part of some individuals to express their opinions publicly on some subjects, an oath was administered to all the witnesses examined at Brechine, Montrose and Aberdeen.

There were doubtless many objections to the system of examining all witnesses in public; but, after the most mature consideration, it appeared that the adoption of a contrary course would have given rise to so much suspicion and jealousy of feeling, that it would have been highly inexpedient. The opportunity of giving any additional evidence after the selected witnesses had been examined, was hardly ever taken advantage of; and it would therefore seem that the evidence given by those witnesses was generally considered as good and sufficient by the weavers and their employers. More than 200 witnesses were examined.

I received every possible assistance from the municipal authorities; the manufacturers in almost every instance appeared anxious to afford me every information in their power;† and the conduct and demeanor of the weavers was highly creditable to them as a class. In the smaller towns and villages, a shorter form of examination was adopted; and the witnesses were selected by myself, at very short

* I have throughout this Report adhered generally to the order in which the various subjects were mentioned in the printed Instructions issued by the Board to their Assistant Commissioners. I have also in some instances quoted the words of these Instructions; these quotations are distinguished by inverted commas.

† I beg to offer my best thanks to Alexander Balfour, esq., Chairman of the Chamber of Commerce, Dundee, Alexander Easson, esq., Dundee, and Ninian Lockhart, esq., Kircaldy, for their valuable assistance; and I am indebted to Mr. Joseph Goodsir, of Glasgow (who acted as clerk to my colleague, Mr. Symons), for much practical information.

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short notice, upon the spot. As a general principle, subject, however, to several exceptions, places containing fewer than 400 looms were not visited; possibly two or three places containing upwards of that number (as Dumblane and Balfron, for instance) may have been omitted, either from want of sufficient information, or from their comparatively remote situation.

There appeared to exist a very prevalent opinion of the practical inutility of the inquiry; and in some places it scarcely excited any interest amongst those whom it concerned. This, however, was by no means universally the case. Frequently it seems to have been considered as one of very considerable importance to the weavers, who attended in large numbers, and appeared to take a lively interest in listening to the examinations.

Evidence given before the Committee of the House of

With respect to that part of the instructions which alludes to the incompleteness and unsatisfactory character of the evidence already taken on this subject by a Committee of the House of Commons, and printed in the Parliamentary Reports of 1834 and 1835, I have only to report the following facts:—

Six witnesses from this district were examined before that Committee; one of these (Mr. James Grant, of Dundee), is since dead; two others, Messrs. Stalker and James M'Ewen, of Perth, were not examined by me, I not being aware, when at Perth, that they had been examined before the Committee; the three others, Messrs. James Buik, Lawrence Don, and John Adam, weavers, were examined by me; the two former admitted that on one principal subject of their evidence, viz. boards of trade, the opinion of the weavers was completely changed since that evidence was given; the third adhered to the evidence he then gave, but he was not selected (as the others were) by his fellow-workmen to give evidence before the Committee, and therefore can only be considered as having expressed his individual opinions; and with respect to the whole of the evidence relating to this district, given before the Committee, I remarked, that it appeared, on many points, to be at variance with that which I have collected; and that, when portions of it were read to the witnesses examined by me, they stated their impression that parts of it were much exaggerated, and at variance with the actual facts, and often seemed surprised that such evidence should have either been given or received as worthy of credit. This particularly applies to the answers to Questions 3248, 3549, 6003, 6010, 6028, 6029, 6042, 6152, 6159.

According to the distinction alluded to in the instructions, the fabrics in the district may, for the purposes of this report, be thus arranged:—

Fabrics.

Woollen.—1. Carpets, in factories.
2. Hard and soft tartans, shawls, &c.

Linen.—1. Harness work; as damasks and table covers.
2. Heavy work, as floor-cloths, broad sheetings, canvas and bagging, generally in factories.
3. Ordinary and light work, as dowlas, common sheeting, and Osnaburghs.

Cotton.—With the exception of certain peculiar fabrics at Perth and Kircaldy, the cotton fabrics in the district are plain and ordinary checks, stripes, pullicates, and coarse book-muslins; the latter at Balfron only.

Almost all the cotton weavers in the district are employed by Glasgow manufacturers.

Other employment.

With respect to the pecuniary condition of the weavers, it is impossible to give, with confidence, any general statement of "what proportion in each trade are exclusively employed in hand-loom weaving, and what proportion engaged in it themselves, or through any members of their family only, in the intervals of other and what pursuits." This proportion is quite different in different places, and is constantly varying in each place. Many of the weavers in the small towns and villages assist, either themselves, or through some members of their family, in getting in the harvest. Field labour, herring and whale fishing, and masons' work are, in most cases, the only other pursuits in which they engage. On the whole, I am of opinion that at the least three-fourths of the weavers are engaged "exclusively" in weaving. A great many persons, who follow various employments at other seasons of the year, weave during the winter months; but I have not considered such persons as "hand-loom weavers," for the purposes of this report; nor have I included a class of weavers only to be found in the remote

remote rural districts, who procure their own materials, and weave coarse linens and woollens, either to the order of their neighbours, or for sale by themselves, known as "customer weavers." They often follow other employments in summer.

With respect to the amount of money "which can be earned per hour in each department of each trade, by men, women and children respectively," it is difficult to give any other than general statements. These have been carefully compiled from the evidence of the witnesses, and in all cases that evidence has been compared with manufacturers' books. It was satisfactory to find that there was not, except in a very few instances, any material error in the *vivâ voce* evidence given on this point. It may be advisable to adhere to the distinction already made between the materials upon which the different classes of weavers are employed.

1. Woollen.

Woollen.

Taking the woollen weavers of East Scotland as a body, I can confidently report that they are "in a condition similar to that of the other labouring classes in the country;" and for this reason, minute accuracy in stating the amount of their earnings may not be very necessary. They are employed in weaving, 1st, *Carpets*, in factories; 2dly, *Hard and soft tartans, and tartan shawls*, generally in their own cottages.

Carpet Weavers.

Carpet weaving generally requires considerable skill and bodily strength. The clear average earnings of the men employed, cannot, in my opinion, be less than 12*s.* a week; many earn 15*s.* and upwards. Their earnings vary extremely, as they are paid by the piece or yard, and under very little restraint as to hours. Some of the less orderly and industrious work very irregularly; for four or five days together perhaps 13 hours a day, and then do no work at all for two or three days. Women are, I believe, never employed. Boys, at about 12 years old, can earn 2*s.* 6*d.* a week, as "draw-boys," and occasionally from 4*s.* to 6*s.* or more at making hearth-rugs, if diligent and tolerably adroit. At about 17 or 18 they can weave carpets. From one to two years' instruction and experience are required to learn carpet weaving. Wages have been very steady for many years past.

Tartan Weavers.

The other woollen weavers in the district are employed on hard and soft tartans and tartan shawls, principally in their own cottages. Those employed on soft tartans and shawls are the best paid of this class, but they are not numerous. Hard tartan weavers are the worst paid weavers employed on woollen. A skilful steady man can earn about 8*s.* 6*d.* (net *) per week at this work; a woman or girl of 16 can earn as much: perhaps 7*s.* would be a fair average. For shawls and soft tartans I should think 9*s.* net per week may be a fair average. Women and girls can weave them as well as men: about two years' instruction may be sufficient in these fabrics. Those, however, who have been accustomed to weave cotton, can learn to weave tartans in about two months. Employment is generally constant, and the working hours may be stated at about 70 per week. For the sake of clearness and brevity, I have here stated the net earnings of woollen weavers. The deductions to which those who work in their own cottages are subject are nearly as follows; viz. 1*s.* per week, winding; † 4*d.* loom-rent, or stance; 2*d.* light; 2*d.* mounting, wear and tear, &c.; total, 1*s.* 8*d.* per week. Most of them, however, have their own looms, but pay rent for the "stance," or space the loom occupies in a loom-shop. The carpet weavers who work in factories are in general subjected to about the same deduction as others for light, and 2*s.* 6*d.* a week in most cases for a draw-boy. The number of woollen weavers in the district is small, compared to those employed on other fabrics. The manufacture is principally carried on at Stirling and its immediate neighbourhood, and at Aberdeen. Perhaps 2,500 looms may be the total number. The woollen weavers, with the exception of those employed on hard tartans at Stirling, did not seem at all desirous of giving evidence before me as to their condition, probably having no complaints to make. I did not observe

General condition of Tartan Weavers.

* Whenever this word is used in this Report, it signifies the actual weekly income, exclusive of all necessary deductions, for wear and tear, winding, loom-stance, &c.

† It should be borne in mind, that in all fabrics, whether woollen, linen or cotton, the labour of winding (*i. e.* rolling the weft on small rollers fitting into the shuttle, called "pirns,") is a necessary deduction from the wages paid to the weaver; it is, however, generally performed by the wife or children of married men.

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observe that their higher wages had any effect in improving their moral or intellectual state. Intemperance was by no means uncommon amongst them; the education of their children was not well attended to; embezzlement prevailed to a certain extent, nor did they seem by any means more intelligent or contented than other weavers earning much lower wages. These observations, however, apply entirely to the tartan weavers of Stirling and its neighbourhood; owing to peculiar and unavoidable circumstances, the inquiry was conducted there under much disadvantage; and I would not wish to be understood as speaking with the same certainty as with respect to other places. The hard tartan weavers complained much of being paid by the piece, instead of by the yard measure. One of the largest and most respectable firms near Stirling has for some time paid by the yard, without experiencing any disadvantage; and it is the opinion of these gentlemen, that justice and fair dealing almost require the general adoption of the same system—[*See* p. 193.] The woollen manufacturer may be considered as very prosperous, and likely to improve still more.*

2. Linen.

Linen.

The total number of looms employed upon linen fabrics in the district may be about 26,000. It is very difficult to compute with any accuracy "the number of families employed, considering each person who manages his own concerns as a family." I should think about two looms and a half per family might be nearly the average, but I cannot pretend to state this with confidence.

Weavers at harness work.

1. "*Harness-work*," (as damask table-cloths, table covers and napkins,) is carried on almost exclvsively at Dumfermline and its immediate neighbourhood, and employs about 3,000 looms. This manufacture has been for several years past increasing, the number of looms having doubled since 1826. Nearly half of the articles produced are exported to the United States. The prospects of this branch of trade are improving; but for the last two years there has been a depression, owing to the recent embarrassment of American commerce. The average of net weekly wages is about 8*s*. 6*d*. Nearly one-half work as journeymen, paying the masters or owners of the loom one-fourth of their earnings to cover all deductions. In the Appendix, under the head *Dumfermline*, will be found several additional particulars with respect to this manufacture. I remarked

Dumfermline.

in Dumfermline a striking superiority in the internal appearance and furniture of the weavers' cottages; these weavers appeared, as a class, to be remarkable for their intelligence, as well as for the decency and order of their appearance and demeanor. One circumstance much to their credit was mentioned: last year, during the winter, about 1,000*l*. was raised by subscription for charitable purposes; about 600*l*. of this was spent in labour on the roads; only 40 adult weavers applied to this fund, and the weather being frequently so bad as to prevent them from working, their wages were sometimes paid in advance. The whole of the sum thus advanced was afterwards repaid, either in money or labour. Notwithstanding these favourable circumstances, embezzlement is complained of; it seems rather on the increase, and no efficient steps are taken to prevent or punish it. Intemperance also prevails to some extent; spirit shops are now open on Sunday evenings, which was not formerly the case. It is also remarkable that this was the only town in the district in which combination *amongst the weavers* has given rise to any open violence. One of the manufacturers recently attempted a reduction, and, as might naturally be expected, the weavers' trades union "struck" against him. Some individuals, however, continued to work for him at the reduced price; a mob assembled in open day by beat of drum, cut the work from the looms, and in some cases broke the looms of these individuals. This happened more than once; it was sometimes done at night; the police of the town is inadequate to prevent or to quell any riot, but some of the offenders were afterwards apprehended and punished. It by no means appeared that the leading men amongst the weavers encouraged these proceedings; they offered their assistance as special constables; but the result was, that no weaver has since ventured to take work at the reduced price.† It should

* I was assured by a respectable and experienced manufacturer at Stirling, that the Waverley Novels, by rendering tartans popular in the temperate climates of Europe, had conferred a very material benefit on the woollen trade of Scotland.

† One of those attacked, stated, that nothing but the fear of violence prevented him from working at the reduced price.

should also be stated, that even where violence was used, no injury was done either to the persons, families, houses or furniture of those thus attacked. In this branch of the weaving trade, although the wages are lower than those of other artisans, or of agricultural labourers in many parts of the district, I cannot report that there exists any severe distress or destitution.

Weavers of heavy Fabrics.

2d. "*Heavy work*," as canvas or sail-cloth, broad sheetings, floor-cloth, some descriptions of bagging, &c. This is entirely carried on in factories; perhaps 4,000 looms may be thus employed in the district. These fabrics generally require able-bodied men, the physical force necessary being often very great, although no great skill is essential. They are almost entirely manufactured in large towns; principally in Dundee, Arbroath, Aberdeen, Montrose and Kircaldy. The average net weekly earnings of this class of weavers is at least 8*s*. 6*d*.; steady and skilful men can earn 10*s*., and in some cases much higher wages; at some fabrics of this description, 15*s*. is not rare. The only deductions to which those who work in factories are subject, are for winding and light, averaging about 1*s*. per week. They are under very little restraint as to hours, and those who receive high wages often work very irregularly. The weekly average would not, in my opinion, be above 60 hours. On carefully examining the books of a canvas factory at Dundee, I found that a week during which the average earnings had been high, was almost invariably followed by one in which very little was earned; the difference frequently amounted to 50 per cent. Saturday afternoon, Monday, and often Tuesday, are considered holidays, or rather idle days, during which little, if any, work is done. This class of weavers is also more addicted to intemperance than the "out-door weavers;"* some allowance, however, should be made for the greater severity of their labour, producing a considerable degree of exhaustion, and thus tempting them to have recourse to whiskey as a stimulant. In Dundee, this propensity produces its usual bad effects; and many weavers earning 15*s*. a week, are constantly in the habit of pawning their clothes for the purpose of obtaining whiskey.† It is scarcely necessary to remark, that the families and dwellings of such persons wear an appearance of slovenly destitution, in spite of their comparatively large earnings. The wages in these fabrics have been much more steady for some years back, than those of the generality of out-door weavers. This is partly attributable to the principal market being the home market, and to the demand being otherwise comparatively regular; that for navy canvas, for instance; in a great measure, also, to the circumstance of a considerable capital being invested in each factory, and to the workmen being assembled in a body under one roof. The capital of the employers enables them to contend against any temporary depression, and exposes them to none of the temptations to attempt secret or irregular reductions in wages to which manufacturers of little or no capital sometimes yield; and the men working under the same roof act and are dealt with rather as a body than as a number of separate individuals. The severity of the labour, and the separation from their families during working hours, also operate to check any disproportionate increase in the supply of labour beyond the existing demand. The factory system is, however, in my opinion, decidedly less favourable to the moral and social state of the weavers, than that of "out-door work." Generally speaking, I am of opinion, that wherever actual distress or destitution exists amongst weavers in this class, it is attributable either to their want of regular and diligent exertion, or to indulgence in whiskey, and consequent habit of having constant recourse to pawnbrokers' shops.

Weavers of light Fabrics.

3d. "*Ordinary or light work*," as dowlas, common sheetings and Osnaburghs. These fabrics may be considered as the staple linen manufacture of Scotland, and may employ from 17,000 looms in summer, to 22,000 or 23,000 in winter. It is almost universally carried on as "out-door work." The looms are placed in small detached buildings, called "loom-shops," immediately adjoining the weavers' cottages, and holding from two to six looms, most commonly four. The prime cost of the looms is from 4*l*. to 5*l*.; they last 20 years or more; part of the fittings, or "mountings," require more or less frequent renewal, according to the

* Those who work at home, and not in factories.

† The existence of pawnbrokers' shops in the towns affords the greatest temptation to intemperance; they most materially contribute to demoralize the weavers of Dundee, for instance.

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the fabric; and a large proportion, at least half, are the property of those who weave with them. The "stance," or space, which a loom occupies in a loom-shop, is generally rented at 10*s.* or 12*s.* per annum; the hire of a loom comes to about the same sum, sometimes less, by the year. A weaver is often the owner of three or four looms, which are used by his wife, children or apprentices, or let to his fellow-workmen. Occasionally there is a small factory, holding from 10 to 40 looms, the whole being the property of the manufacturer; this, however, is by no means common. The weavers working entirely on their own account, and being paid according to the quantity of work done, are under no restraint as to hours. I am, however, of opinion, that 72 working hours per week is rather below than above the average. I found many instances of weavers working regularly 13 hours a day, exclusive of meals, and, in some cases, for several days together, 16 hours a day. The loom-shops being always low, and often damp, it may be naturally supposed that confinement in them during 12 or 13 working hours, for six days in the week, produces some effect on the constitution of those employed. I do not believe this effect to be actually injurious to the average duration of life: any tendency to this result is considerably counteracted by the regularity of hours and meals, and the complete shelter from the weather; but, as might be expected, a large proportion of the weaving population is easily distinguished, by even a casual observer, from other classes of labourers, by a pale complexion, a somewhat worn appearance, and a stooping, and by no means robust or active carriage. Of course, this is, in some measure, attributable to the poverty of their food; nor can their appearance as a class, in my opinion, be said to be squalid, or to denote actual destitution. The earnings of this class of workmen vary considerably, according to the different fabrics on which they are employed, and the comparative accessibility of the market for their labour. Inland towns and villages, where there is scarcely any other trade, and where work is sent from the larger towns, are naturally the most unfavourable situations. The work in such cases is generally supplied from a distance; and the expenses of carriage and agency place the weavers, in such places, under a disadvantage in competing with others more favourably situated.

Wages.

The average may be nearly as follows:

	s.	*d.*
Good hands (*i. e.* able-bodied men), under favourable circumstances, net wages per week	7	6
Inferior hands, old men, women and boys	5	6
First class, under unfavourable circumstances	6	–
Second class ditto	4	–

The averages of several places will be found in the Appendix. From two to three years' instruction at least will generally be necessary to make a skilful weaver, supposing a boy or girl to commence at 12 or 13; in a few months, however, they may be able to earn about half wages; but they require frequent occasional assistance from those working in the same shop. The deductions from the gross earnings vary from 1*s.* to 2*s.* per week, according to the expense of "winding" in different fabrics: 1*s.* 9*d.* is a very common amount, which may be thus divided:

	s.	*d.*
Winding	1	1
Loom stance	–	3
Light	–	1½
Wear and tear, mountings, &c.	–	2
Dressing, tallow, brushes, &c.	–	1½
	1	9

Apprentices

Generally speaking, a weaver can at present obtain constant employment throughout the year. No regular system of apprenticeship prevails. An indenture is very rarely used, owing to the expense of the stamp; but most of the children are taught by their parents at home. Sometimes half the earnings of the apprentice are taken by the master; in other cases a fee of 1*l.* or 2*l.* is paid for the child's instruction. The apprentices very frequently leave their masters before the time for which they agreed to serve expires. Where the master

master has received a fee, he has of course no interest in preventing them from doing so; in other cases they are encouraged by their parents, or prompted by their own dislike of restraint, to attempt to work for themselves before they have acquired the necessary degree of skill and experience. They then require, and always receive, without difficulty, occasional assistance from abler workmen; and the manufacturers generally give them employment without any scruple. The injurious effect of this state of things is perceived and lamented by the weavers almost universally; and many are of opinion, that lowering the stamp duty on indentures to 2*s.* 6*d.*, and fixing the period of apprenticeship at two or three years, would be a great advantage; others fear that it is too late to attempt to impose any restraint, and that neither parents nor children would now submit to any uniform period of regular apprenticeship. Charitable assistance has been very rarely afforded to the weavers; they entertain a strong and creditable repugnance to it; nor is there in general any available fund for the purpose. Wherever such assistance has been afforded, it has been partial and temporary, and almost universally distributed in the shape of wages for labour on the roads, or otherwise judiciously applied. Under unfavourable circumstances (particularly where the manufacture of inferior fabrics is carried on in inland towns and villages at a distance from the market), distress may be said to exist amongst those weavers who are encumbered with families of children under 12 years of age. In these cases their utmost exertions can only secure them scanty clothing, and a diet of potatoes, oatmeal, and a very small proportion of milk and herrings; those who are without children, or whose children are old enough to work, seldom suffer any actual distress.

Charitable assistance.

3. Cotton.

Cotton.

There may be in all about 5,000 looms employed on cotton fabrics within the district: with the exception of Perth, and a few looms at Kircaldy and Aberdeen, they are employed by Glasgow manufacturers. Next to Perth, Dumblane Auchterarder Balfron and Kinross are the principal cotton-weaving places. The wages vary considerably, according to the fabrics. At "Paisley shawls" the first class of workmen will average 8*s.* 6*d.* net per week; the second class, including women, 6*s.* 6*d.* At "umbrella ginghams" (carried on solely at Perth), from 5*s.* 6*d.* to 6*s.* 6*d.* At "pullicates" and "ginghams," the first class, 4*s.* 8*d.* (for a 15^{00} pullicate, 3 shots over, $73\frac{1}{2}$ porter); second class, women, boys and old men, 3*s.* 2*d.* At these fabrics (ginghams, pullicates, &c.), when the reed is finer than usual, the wages are somewhat higher; in a few very rare cases (as, for instance, an 18^{00} pullicate, 4 shots over, 88 porter), as high as 7*s.* 6*d.** Generally speaking, the condition of cotton-weavers in the ordinary fabrics, working at a considerable distance frnm the market for their goods, is one of great poverty. At Kinross, Dumblane and Auchterarder, for instance, the average of net weekly wages is not above 4*s.*, and there is scarcely any other employment. In these places, as well as those where the lightest and worst paid linen fabrics are woven, one principal means of support is derived by the weavers from cultivating potatoes in ground occupied by farmers, frequently rent free, or at a low rent, finding their own manure. From the improvements in agriculture, however, and particularly since the introduction of bone-dust as manure, the farmers are becoming averse to the continuance of this system. The moral condition of the cotton weavers does not seem to be materially affected by their poverty, but is in general extremely creditable to them. The education of their children naturally suffers from it, and the want of furniture, clothes and comfort is but too painfully apparent in their cottages. They are, generally speaking, in a condition but little removed from actual want, from which many of them sometimes suffer. They are certainly as industrious and frugal as any other class of weavers. Intemperance is rare amongst them; nor does embezzlement prevail to any considerable extent: I was informed that it is occasionally committed under the immediate pressure of want of food.

Wages.

Moral condition.

With respect to the moral condition of the weavers in the district generally, they appear to be almost universally possessed of elementary scriptural information,

Weavers in general: Moral condition.

* The best paid cotton-weavers in the district are employed on striped shirting at Kircaldy; their net earnings will average 8*s.* 6*d.* per week. This is, however, a peculiar fabric.

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information, and to be generally in the habit of attending Divine worship. In the larger towns, as might naturally be expected, their attendance is not so regular; but this may in some measure be ascribed to a deficiency in church accommodation for the poorer classes.

They show a remarkable desire for intellectual improvement; lectures delivered on subjects of any interest to them (*e. g.* on political economy) are generally very fully attended; books and periodicals are obtained by means of subscription amongst themselves, the latter to a great extent; most of them read the newspapers which accord with their political opinions. It may perhaps afford some indication of their literary tastes, to state that, next to the newspapers, "Chambers' Edinburgh Journal," and "Wilson's Tales of the Borders," were almost universally popular.* With respect, however, to their acquaintance with the machinery, implements, and general state of their own trade, "the number and comparative accessibility of the markets for their labour, and generally with the means of bettering their condition," their knowledge did not appear by any means remarkable, and in my opinion there is a want of activity and energy of mind on these subjects observable, which would seem to be in a great degree attributable to the stationary and monotonous nature of their employment, in the course of which, they are but seldom called upon to use their intellectual faculties or resources, or to employ other than physical exertions wth any hope of reward. On the whole, however, the superiority of their intellectual condition to that of the generality of the labouring classes in England is very striking.

Their diligence and frugality are generally very great; the mode of their expenditure is in most cases regular and economical; their savings (when the rate of their wages allows of any), are frequently invested in benefit societies, or otherwise rationally employed. In the larger towns, however, there are many unfortunate exceptions to the truth of these statements, which will be noticed hereafter.

Marriage.

With respect to the average age of marriage in each sex, I am inclined to think that the nature of their employment, and the manner in which it is carried on has some tendency to encourage early marriages, and that very little effort is made to accumulate any capital previously to marriage; to a want of prudence and forethought on this point, it seems that much of their poverty is attributable, and this was frequently admitted to be the case by some of the older and more experienced men. I could not ascertain that a low rate of wages had any effect in diminishing the number of marriages, or in postponing the period of marriage in either sex.

Embezzlement.

Embezzlement of materials does not seem generally to prevail to any great extent in the linen trade; in some places it is almost unknown; in other towns it is prevalent in this fabric. In towns of some size the facilities for disposing of stolen materials are of course much increased.† The weaving of cotton in the district being, with the exception of Perth, carried on in small towns, embezzlement is by no means so common as in the country about Glasgow; in Perth it was said to be quite unknown; by the woollen manufacturers it was never complained of. The manufacturers frequently neglect to take proper precautions to prevent or detect it, and their reluctance to admit the extent to which it prevailed, or to take any general or well-organized measures for its prevention or punishment was in most instances apparent.‡ It may often exist without being suspected, and the difficulty of obtaining a conviction is very great. The Act 17 Geo. III. c. 56, is perfectly well calculated to obviate this difficulty; but from the proceedings under that Act being required to be according to English forms, it is practically useless in Scotland. Were an alteration made in this particular, a power of searching houses at night upon sworn information added, and the ultimate appeal transferred to the next Circuit Court of Justiciary, I consider that the means for punishing and preventing embezzlement would be far more efficient than at present. It is greatly encouraged by a class of vagrants, who, under the denomination of "ragmen," (often called "bowl corks,") visit the cottages of the weavers for the purpose of collecting stolen materials (generally *weft*, from the women and children who wind it), and who frequently seduce very young children into the commission

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* *See* particularly Appendix, "Dumfermline."

† *See* Appendix under the head "Forfar."

‡ At Forfar, for instance, the witnesses selected by the manufacturers would not admit that it existed to any material extent, whilst it appears, from the letter given in the Appendix, that they constantly suffer from it.

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commission of acts of dishonesty by means of a stock of sweetmeats, with which these miscreants are provided for this express object. On this subject, however, it is probable that other districts will afford a much more ample field for obtaining information than that of East Scotland. Whiskey is the only stimulant to which the weavers resort. In the larger towns intemperance prevails to a considerable extent; it seems to have increased most rapidly since the reduction of the duty on whiskey; it is much encouraged by the number of pawnbrokers' shops; there are many instances of weavers earning the highest wages who pledge some of their clothing almost every week for the purpose of indulging in it: it is in some instances materially checked by the establishment of Temperance Societies, and does not prevail to any very great extent in the country towns and villages; in the larger towns, however, it produces the worst effects on the morals of the weavers, and is one of the chief causes of destitution too often apparent in their families.

Intemperance.

Children.

The weavers' children appear to attend both Divine worship and Sunday schools to the same extent as the children of other labouring classes: their attendance at week-day schools is seriously interfered with by the poverty of their parents inducing them to employ their children either at the loom, or as winders or draw-boys, at an early age, frequently at 12 years old, and sometimes even younger: from about eight or nine years of age, until fit for these employments, they generally attend week-day schools, and in many cases attend schools in the evenings, when employed during the day. In the many instances in which I made the inquiry of the children whom I found at the loom, or acting as draw-boys, I do not recollect one in which they had not received at least elementary instruction at school; the expense is generally about 4*s*. a quarter, and is paid by the parents; in some instances this is lessened by funds having been bequeathed or subscribed for the support of schools. A feeling of honest pride generally prevents the poorer classes in Scotland from wishing to avail themselves of the means of a gratuitous education, even where such means are within their reach. The earnings and capacities of the schoolmasters are of course extremely different; there is said, however, to have been a marked improvement of late years in the system generally pursued. The subject of education generally excites much interest in the minds of the wealthier classes, who seem anxious to promote and improve it: the weavers frequently make considerable sacrifices for the advancement of their children, and generally show much anxiety on the subject. The schools being almost universally closed for the vacation during the time I was engaged on the inquiry, prevented me from obtaining as much information as I could have wished from personal inspection; but I may mention, that education appeared to be quite as general amongst the children of the weavers as amongst those of any other class in Scotland, and it seemed to be much superior to that of the children of the labouring classes in England. Dr. Bell's school* at Aberdeen, and a private school kept by Mr. Forrester at Kirkcaldy, appeared to me to be the best schools I have ever seen attended by children of the labouring classes in any part of the kingdom; at the first, however, the proportion of weavers' children was (perhaps from local circumstances) very small. Infant schools are not uncommon; I saw one at Forfar very well conducted. I did not hear of the existence of any such industrial schools as are alluded to in the instructions. Fears were expressed in several instances by the weavers that, owing to their poverty, the education of the rising generation was deteriorating. I am, however, happy to say that this did not appear to me to be the fact; and a great and general improvement in the various systems of instruction was almost universally admitted.

Schools.

Wages

The wages of woollen weavers in the district have been for many years past, very high and steady, compared with those of weavers employed on linen and cotton. In these latter fabrics a sudden and great fall of wages occurred in 1816. There have been several fluctuations since, nor have they ever recovered from that fall; indeed, a strong tendency to depression may be remarked, although such depression has not been uniform—[*See* the Tables of Wages in the Appendix, under the heads *Dumfermline*, *Aberdeen*, and *Forfar*]. Since 1826 or 1828, wages appear to have been comparatively steady. The wages were very high, although subject to fluctuations during the last war, and it therefore by no means appears to me that the condition of the weavers has been getting uniformly worse since 1793.

* This is the name by which it is generally known; I am not aware whether it be the correct designation.

Causes of the fall of Wages.

1793. The Tables of Wages in the Appendix will show that the wages of a very large proportion of the hand-loom-weavers are 50 per cent. lower than those of many other artisans, and scarcely ever equal to those of agricultural labourers.

Power-looms.

I am of opinion that the substitution of the power-loom for the hand-loom is one of the chief causes of the fall of hand-loom-weavers' wages. This operates more immediately upon cotton fabrics, but of course has a very considerable, although indirect, effect upon the wages of linen weavers. It should be borne in mind, that the weaving of the finer cotton fabrics requires considerable skill, and that cotton weavers find, in consequence, no difficulty in weaving almost any other material to which they may be driven, by the power-loom competing with them to greater advantage in the cotton fabrics—[*See* p. 195.] Power-looms are employed in linen weaving, but hitherto to a comparatively small extent, at Dundee, Aberdeen and Montrose. There is, however, a probability that they will increase in number, although, owing to the less ductile nature of the material, not with the same advantages as in cotton. So effectually does machinery now compete with manual labour in cotton fabrics, that I saw at Glasgow large numbers of power-looms standing idle, owing to the then low rate of hand-loom wages, which I was informed were only waiting for the slightest advance of such wages, in order to be worked at a remunerating profit, until a fresh reduction should again take place.* Improvements are constantly making in machinery, and it is thus enabled to compete with hand labour with constantly increasing advantage; in the hand-loom no improvement has taken place since Jacquard's invention. The power-loom, it is true, provides employment for vast numbers of persons, but it is principally girls from 13 to 18 that are employed. One of these can manage two power-looms, and produce as much cloth as three or four able-bodied male weavers. Many fabrics formerly employing hand-loom weavers are now exclusively made by power-looms, and those weavers assist to glut the market for labour in other fabrics. I am not here considering the effect of the power-loom upon any other class than that of the hand-loom weavers; it certainly appears to me to have a great effect in preventing any advance in their wages.

Foreign Competition.

Foreign competition was alluded to by the witnesses as another principal cause for the depreciation of their wages; it is thought that this is promoted by the exportation of yarn, and by restrictions imposed by foreign States on the importation of British manufactures. With respect to the degree to which it operates, I cannot speak with any confidence, all the statements being very vague; but the Reports of Messrs. Symons and Keyser will doubtless afford most important information on the subject. The circumstance of those fabrics which are dependent upon the home market being generally productive of higher wages than those for exportation, certainly appears to point out foreign competition as one of the causes of the fall of wages.

There is no question but that a very considerable exportation of linen, woven in the district, takes place to France, which would be at once destroyed by the raising of the present import duties by that country, and which would be greatly increased by their reduction; in Dundee and its neighbourhood great anxiety is naturally felt on this point. There are no peculiar legislative enactments affecting the linen trade in Scotland; and with respect to the operation on the cotton manufacture of the duty on raw cotton, I have nothing to report. The withdrawal of the large bounties formerly paid on linen exported, seems to have had a beneficial rather than an injurious effect on that manufacture.

Corn-laws.

The operation of the laws affecting the importation of corn was stated by the witnesses of all classes, with scarcely an exception, to be most injurious to the hand-loom weavers, as well as to their immediate employers. To this cause the gradual deterioration of their condition was generally, and in many cases exclusively, attributed. It would be impossible to describe too strongly the unanimity and strength of the feeling on this point which pervades the district. It was so constantly reiterated by weavers, agents, manufacturers, both of large and of small capital, and merchants, that I should ill discharge my duty if I did not

* The wages of woollen weavers not having fallen materially, and those of linen-weavers being higher, and having fallen less than those of cotton weavers, appear to confirm the prevalent opinion of the effect of the power-looms upon hand-loom weavers' wages. In woollen fabrics, power-looms are never used, and only to a small extent in linens.

not thus state the fact as distinctly and strongly as the nature of this Report will admit. Their operation was said to have a peculiarly injurious effect upon the hand-loom weavers in several ways; viz.—

1st. By pressing with greatest severity upon them, as the poorest class of operatives, since they require nearly the same quantity of farinaceous food as those whose earnings are much larger than their own.

2dly. By preventing those countries whose staple produce is corn, from exporting it to Great Britain, and taking our textile manufactures in return, and by affording them a pretext for subjecting such manufactures to heavy import duties, as a measure of commercial retaliation.

3dly. By encouraging foreign countries to commence and support textile manufactures, in order to supply themselves with those articles which the exclusion of their corn prevents them from purchasing from Great Britain.

4thly. By contributing to keep the price of food so much lower in these countries than it is in Great Britain, as to enable foreign weavers to undersell our own. It was also suggested, that since the land-owners in Scotland are not (as in England and Wales) heavily taxed for the maintenance of the poor, they have no claim to any peculiar advantage over the other classes of the community.

Resumption of Cash-payments and Taxation.

The resumption of cash-payments, and the general pressure of taxation, were occasionally mentioned; but they were not stated to have had any peculiarly injurious effect upon the hand-loom weavers.

Control over Wages exercised by Masters.

I could not ascertain that the employers of the hand-loom weavers had any peculiar facilities or temptations to make reductions of wages uncalled for by the circumstances of the trade. As a proof that the rate of wages is not dependent upon the will of any one individual, I may state the fact of an attempt to reduce wages by a single manufacturer at Dumfermline having failed, whilst I was engaged on this inquiry, owing to others refusing to follow his example; and the additional fact, that the wages paid by different manufacturers in the same fabric are not unfrequently different; whereas it should seem, that if all manufacturers were compelled to follow the example of those paying the lowest wages, the rate of wages in each fabric must be uniform throughout the trade.

Frauds practised by Masters in measurement of Work.

The frauds practised by masters in the measurement of their work cannot have any material effect upon wages, since such frauds are very partially practised; and however objectionable in point of principle, and on account of the bad feeling they create on the part of the weavers, are not carried practically to such an extent as may appear from statements and tables to those unacquainted with the details of the weaving trade.

The loudest complaints of these frauds were made by the weavers of Dundee, Arbroath and Kirriemuir. At Forfar and Brechine the manufacturers had made arrangements which satisfied the weavers. At Kirriemuir such an arrangement had failed to answer its purpose. To the evidence which was given on this subject before the Committee of the House of Commons in 1834, I have nothing to add.* It would be difficult to make the details of the system intelligible to those not conversant with the trade. Its practical results may be thus stated:—The manufacturers in these, and many other places, pay the weavers by "the piece." A "piece" is *supposed* to contain a certain number of "mill ells" of warp, which again are *supposed* to contain a certain number of inches; but these "mill ells" (not being a standard measure) vary considerably in their actual length, and the quantity of cloth woven is not ascertained by actual measurement. Thus it happens that one weaver may produce a longer web than another, and yet receive no more pay; and also that whilst the wages continue nominally the same, they may be secretly depreciated by increasing the quantity of warp actually given out. In many places the weavers are paid by the "spindle" (generally the spindle of warp); and where this is done, no complaints are heard, for the quantity is thus at once ascertained. The weavers certainly suffer to a small extent from the facilities to fraud which paying by the piece affords the masters, and feel strongly that they are justly entitled to be paid according to the real amount of labour they bestow; and as this state of things causes much irritation, and is considered "a grievance,"

* See particularly answers to questions 3372–3376, 3402–3427, 3521–3527.

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'a grievance," it is much to be wished that payment by the spindle or the yard, to which the manufacturers have no great objection, could be generally adopted. [*See* p. 195]

Combinations and Strikes.

Combinations and "strikes" are of very rare occurrence amongst the hand-loom weavers of this district; in many places none have ever occurred; nor could I ascertain that in any one instance where they had occurred, any advance in wages had resulted from them.

"The want of combinations and strikes" cannot, therefore, in my opinion, have had any effect on wages, if by this expression is meant the want of their actual existence or occurrence; but it certainly appears to me that there are some peculiar circumstances by which any effectual combination amongst hand-loom weavers is necessarily prevented; whilst in some other trades such combination has a very considerable effect—sometimes in raising the price of labour, and at others by preventing its depreciation.* It may be unnecessary to enter at any lengh upon this subject; but amongst the chief reasons why effectual combination is impracticable amongst weavers, I would suggest, the comparatively slight degree of skill and physical strength required in those fabrics employing the largest number of looms, which thus allows women and children's labour to compete with that of men,—the comparatively large amount and fixed character of the capital required in the loom and house-room for it,—the comparatively small amount of fixed capital in the hands of the employers of labour, such capital being embarked almost entirely in raw material not of a perishable nature, and not, therefore, subjecting them to any heavy loss if unemployed for a time,—the circumstance of the quantity and quality of labour required by the employers being generally uniform, and their not being so frequently "tied to time," or dependent either upon the seasons or the caprices of fashion as many others of their class,—and, lastly, the comparatively small amount of weavers' earnings, which would prevent their being able to surpport either themselves or others, when deprived, even for a short time, of their weekly wages.† "The increase of their numbers without a proportional increase in the demand for their labour," is, in my opinion, a chief cause of the depreciation of their wages. This increase is, in my opinion, primarily attributable to the stimulus of the high rate of wages during the late war, and to the ease with which the trade is learnt. It is promoted by the children being generally brought up to their parents' trade, and particularly by the want of any effectual regulations as to apprenticeship.

Increase of Numbers.

Want of Industry and Frugality.

"Want of diligence, honesty, frugality and temperance," causes some distress amongst the weavers in large towns, and often amongst the best paid; but none of these causes can be said to operate generally throughout the district. Ill-directed charity is certainly not amongst the causes of their low condition.

Results of comparison of various Classes of Weavers.

With respect to the result of any comparison between various classes of hand-loom weavers, I have to remark, in the first place, the great difference between the earnings of those weavers employed on woollen (particularly on shawls and soft tartans), and those employed on other materials. It is not uncommon to find that in a small town or village, where the average net weekly wages of the generality of weavers employed on cotton or linen are from 4*s*. 6*d*. to 6*s*. 6*d*., a few woollen weavers are earning from 12*s*. to 15*s*.‡ This difference is not, in my opinion, sufficiently explained by the different degree of skill or strength required in the weaving woollen fabrics. A cotton weaver can easily learn to weave these fabrics in a few weeks; and a girl of 16 can earn as much at this work as her father. Under these circumstances, it might naturally be expected that competition would have its usual effect, and that the woollen weavers' wages would be reduced much nearer the general standard. This is, however, by no means the case. The weavers and manufacturers whom I examined were unable to afford any satisfactory explanation of this anomaly. I can only attribute it to the poverty of the cotton and linen weavers, which prevents their being able to make the

* The employers are generally unwilling to admit that combinations are in any case successful; no doubt they are often injurious to all parties, but I found that in several cases they had raised and maintained the rate of wages.

† See answers of J. B. Baxter, esq. Procurator-Fiscal of Forfarshire. Appendix, "Dundee," p. 206.

‡ See Appendix, "Kinross" and "Auchtermuchty." The same thing, I am informed, is particularly remarked at Dumblane.

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the necessary change in the "mounting" of the looms (which would cost about 20*s*.), or to spare even the short time necessary for instruction. These causes seem to me hardly sufficient of themselves; but a want of enterprise (if it may be so called) is very observable amongst the generality of weavers. They are often very reluctant to attempt any fabric to which they have not been accustomed, even though it should promise higher earnings; and in some fabrics manufacturers find considerable difficulty arising from this feeling.

My opinion on this subject is confirmed by an answer to some questions received after the above was written, from R. Methven, esq., Procurator-fiscal of Fifeshire, whose experience, knowledge of political economy, and habits of investigation, render his views peculiarly deserving of attention. He says, "the weaver of yarns of flax or cotton cannot take up the weaving of worsted yarns without some previous practice in the art, and also incurring some expense in fitting up a proper loom for the manufacture. It is also to be remembered, that many of the weavers, and it is probable a great majority of them, save nothing, or marry early, are burthened with numerous families, and cannot afford this expense. What confirms this view of the matter is, that a manufacturer here (Cupar, Fife) (although there are numerous weavers of linen yarns in the town and neighbouring county), is obliged to send his yarns, intended for ticks of beds, to Kircaldy, 18 miles from this, and pay the weavers employed by him there about 3*s*. per week more than the linen yarn weavers obtain here. This he attributes to the want of previous practice in the art of weaving this description of goods, to the labour being heavier, and requiring a heavier loom, and to the inability of weavers, who are fitted for the work, to pay the expense of fitting up looms for the work." A similar circumstance was mentioned by a principal manufacturer, and the chief cause of it was stated to be the reluctance of the weavers to risk any change of fabric.

With respect to a comparison between those classes of weavers exposed to the competition of power-looms, and those free from such competition, it is necessary to remark, that the effects of power-loom competition are felt by those not immediately exposed to it. For instance, the wages of weavers in any cotton fabric being reduced by it, they apply themselves to linen weaving, and thus create a disproportionate supply of labour, and reduce the wages of linen weavers. I found more than one instance where this had occurred, and where nearly the whole manufacture of a town or village had thus changed from cotton to linen.

I also observed that, generally speaking, in those fabrics which are principally consumed by the home market, the wages are both higher and more steady than in those for the foreign market. Foreign competition, and the frequent occurrence of political and commercial disturbances in other countries, may, perhaps, in some measure, account for this difference.* I found but very few instances of English weavers working in Scotland: they were generally considered as superior workmen, but addicted to intemperance and turbulence. Irish weavers are very common in the large towns: I did not find them to be less industrious or less orderly than the Scotch; but, from their generally commencing without even the least capital, from their not possessing that strong anxiety for a decent outward appearance, and anxiety to conceal any visible signs of poverty (that "honest pride" so universal in Scotland), and from their being in the habit of living and associating exclusively with their own countrymen, the general appearance and example of the Irish is by no means beneficial to their Scotch neighbours, and I have no doubt has some effect in deteriorating their habits and ideas, particularly with respect to the necessity of regular and unremitting exertion. This, however, only occurs in large towns.

Remeries suggested by the Instructions.

Measurement.

I now come to the various remedies suggested. With respect to a more exact specification of the length and breadth of the pieces of goods to be manufactured, I am of opinion that the only method which would be completely satisfactory, is payment by the measured standard yard. The manufacturers whom I consulted on the point, seemed almost unanimously of opinion that it might easily be adopted. Some few of them pay by the yard at present; and the weavers in those places where they complained of the uncertain length of the webs,

* The disturbed state of Spain and Portugal has had a very injurious effect upon some branches of the linen trade, and the late derangement of the circulating medium in America inflicted most severe losses upon all the principal linen manufacturers in the district.

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webs, are most anxious for the introduction of this system. At the same time it should be stated, that complaints on this subject are by no means universal. The weavers are quite satisfied where they are paid by the spindle; and even where paid by the piece, an amicable arrangement has, in some cases, been made on the subject.

Reduction of Stamp Duty on Indentures of Apprenticeship.

The reduction of the stamp duty upon indentures of apprenticeship to 5*s.* or 2*s.* 6*d.*, and the providing of short and cheap printed forms for the purpose, which could be filled up without professional assistance, would, in many cases, in my opinion, produce a very good effect. Owing to the expenses attendant upon the drawing up of an indenture under the present system, such an instrument is hardly ever in use amongst weavers. Providing them with the means of securing by law the services of the apprentice for a definite period, at a small expense, would, in my opinion, not only secure to the apprentice the attainment of a competent degree of skill in his trade, before he attempted to take work on his own account, but would materially conduce to the improvement of his habits of regularity, diligence, subordination and industry; a want of all which qualities is too frequently observable in those who are at present (inaccurately) called apprentices. It would, I conceive, also tend rather to the diminution than to the increase of the number of those brought up to hand-loom weaving, because, if it were possible to secure a child's services for a definite period, without any considerable expense, masters would have recourse to this step, and would be reluctant to teach those who would not agree to bind themselves for a sufficient time to enable the masters to expect some profit from their acquired skill. I found that this was generally the case in other trades;* and although, from the comparative facility of learning most kinds of weaving, the period of apprenticeship might often be shorter, I see no reason for thinking that the general feeling or conduct of the parties would be different in this respect, provided the expense were so reduced as to be easily within the reach of all classes of weavers.

Embezzlement: *see* pp. 190. 209.

With respect to embezzlement, I have already stated my opinion at pages 190, 191; and *see* Appendix, "Forfar," p. 209.

Fixing minimum rate of Wages

The probable effect of "a law which should attempt to provide that the money paid for weaving by the hand-loom each description of article should be incapable of diminution," would, in my opinion, be (supposing it possible to enforce such a law throughout the Empire), to drive to foreign countries almost the whole of the hand-loom weaving trade in the linen and cotton frabrics. Woollen weaving might possibly continue to flourish in spite of such a law, the wages being generally very steady in that fabric, the demand principally for the home market, and apparently regular, and on the increase. I am, however, of opinion, that any such law, if enacted, would be constantly evaded, without any difficulty, whenever it became the interest of the weavers to evade it; and I am confirmed in this opinion by the evidence of Dr. Bowring with respect to the actual operation of a similar measure at Lyons in 1832 [*See* "Report from the Select Committee on Hand-loom Weavers' Petitions; ordered to be printed 1st July 1835," p. 11, question 60]. The weavers in this district, as well as the manufacturers, are quite unanimous in their opinion of the futility of any attempt to regulate by law the price of labour. When asked by me their opinion on this subject, they generally described any such measure as "a nuisance;"† "useless, perfectly Utopian;"‡ and "worse than the corn-laws."§ I only found one individual who expressed a favourable opinion of Mr. Fielden's Bill, and this person was an intelligent newspaper reporter, who had formerly been a weaver. It did not appear to me that the masters either possessed or exercised any arbitary power of lowering the workmen's wages; nor did the weavers suggest the existence of any such power. Competition operates as in other trades; and I found that in those places where there were very few employers possessed of considerable capital (who might, therefore, be supposed to possess facilities for using any such power), the wages were always higher and more regular than where there were many manufacturers of small capital.‖ I am not ignorant that a measure of the kind

* So well are artisans in general aware of this effect of apprenticeship, that in all their combinations it is the subject of strict regulations, often enforced by "strikes," even where no disputes arise as to the rate of wages.

† "A similar evil to the corn-laws," was the phrase used at Perth.

‡ At Dundee. *See* p. 207.

§ At Arbroath. *See* p. 209.

‖ I would cite Montrose as an example of the correctness of this assertion; there are about five or six manufacturing establishments in that town, and the weavers are quite conscious that they are more liberally treated than others.

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kind above alluded to was recommended by the Committee of the House of Commons in 1835; nor should I have ventured to place my single opinion in opposition to this authority with any confidence, were I not supported by the decided and unanimous feeling on this subject which pervades the entire district of East Scotland.

Remedies suggested by the Weavers.

Repeal of the Corn-laws.

The only remedy universally, and often exclusively, suggested by the weavers and their employers, is the gradual, but ultimately total, repeal of the present corn-laws. I have already stated (p. 193) the means by which it is supposed that their operation is peculiarly injurious to the hand-loom weavers; but it by no means follows that their repeal would be as beneficial as their enactment is supposed to have been injurious. Notwithstanding the excitement and the prejudices existing amongst the weavers on this subject (which are not a little encouraged and fostered by its political bearing, and the efforts of itinerant orators), the most intelligent are aware, that if such repeal should have a very injurious effect on the agricultural interest, this effect will ultimately be felt by themselves; and it is from a great increase of the demand for textile manufactures on the part of those countries which, in the event of such repeal, would supply us with corn, that they expect a certain and considerable gain. How far any such increased demand might be checked by the commercial regulations of foreign governments, influenced by a desire of what is called "protecting" their own manufactures from British competition; how far the repeal of these laws might affect the value of money, or the prosperity of other classes of the community, under existing circumstances, it must, of course, be for the wisdom of the Legislature to consider.

Universal Suffrage.

Universal suffrage, for the purpose of securing an adequate representation of the working classes in the House of Commons, was very frequently proposed as a principal means of improving their condition. By "universal suffrage," it was meant, that every sane man, unconvicted of crime, and of 21 years of age, should have an equal vote in the election of Members of Parliament. A knowledge of reading and writing was not considered a necessary qualification. Excepting, however, the repeal of the corn-laws, I could not ascertain that any definite practical advantage was expected to result from this measure, even supposing its adoption to be expedient or practicable. Most of the manufacturers of small capital agreed with the weavers in recommending it.

Emigration.

There only remains for me to allude to a remedy not suggested by either the instructions or the Report of the Committee of the House of Commons, and which was only mentioned by three or four individuals amongst the witnesses examined by me; namely, emigration to our own colonies. Its beneficial effects would, in my opinion, be rather remote than immediate, and there are at present no means by which it could be brought into operation to any great extent. In principle, however, it appears to me so unexceptionably and unquestionably beneficial to all classes, and experience has so clearly demonstrated its advantages, that I am not without hopes of seeing its application greatly extended. By not only diminishing the supply of labour at home, but by increasing the demand for our manufactured goods in the colonies, and at the same time providing them with the means of rendering available their natural advantages, it would appear calculated to confer the utmost possible advantages upon all parties. The weavers in the rural districts, from their superior intelligence, their frugal habits, and their familiarity with agricultural labour, would, in general, in my opinion, succeed well as emigrants; and when any temporary depression occurred in trade, would gladly avail themselves of emigration, were the means provided for them. I do not, however, feel myself warranted in enlarging upon this subject, and therefore here conclude my Report.

I have &c.

College, Doctors' Commons,
November 1838.

(signed) *John Dorney Harding.*

Since this Report was written, I am happy to hear that there has been a general improvement in the prospects of the linen trade in East Scotland. Wages have, in many places, risen slightly, and work is more plentiful, and there are prospects of a further advance. This is generally attributed to the revival of commercial stability and confidence which has taken place in the United States.

APPENDIX.*

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AVERAGE Fiars prices† of Wheat and Oatmeal in the Counties of *Aberdeen, Perth, Forfar* and *Fife*, from 1830 to 1836 inclusive.

Aberdeen.

	s.	d.	
Wheat	45	$6\frac{10}{24}$	per imperial quarter.
Oatmeal	14	$5\frac{1}{7}$	per boll of 140 imperial lbs.

Perth.

Wheat, 1st	51	$4\frac{1}{7}$	per imperial quarter.
Ditto, 2d	42	$11\frac{6}{12}$	ditto.
Oatmeal	16	$5\frac{1}{2}$	per boll of 140 imperial lbs.

Forfar.

Wheat	46	$10\frac{6}{7}$	per imperial quarter.
Oatmeal	16	$3\frac{2}{7}$	per boll of 140 imperial lbs.

Fife.

Wheat (white)	45	$11\frac{8}{24}$	per imperial quarter
Ditto (red)	44	$-\frac{2}{7}$	ditto.
Oatmeal	16	$3\frac{2}{7}$	per boll of 140 imperial lbs.

ABSTRACT of Returns to printed Schedules relating to the Price of Provisions principally consumed by Weavers in the district. 1838.

	s.	d.		s.	d.
Flour, per stone imperial	from 2	–	to 3	–	
Oatmeal - ditto	1	8	„ 2	2	
Potatoes - ditto	–	4	„ –	6	
Butcher meat, per lb.	–	4	„ –	6	
Milk, per pint, unskimmed	–	2	„ –	4	
Coals, per bag of one cwt.	–	10	„ 1	–	
Candles per lb.	–	6			

WAGES

* Throughout this Appendix, the various statements are made upon the authority of the Assistant-commissioner, except where any other authority is expressly named.

† Persons unacquainted with Scotland may not be aware, that in each county a jury is annually summoned by the sheriff, who, after hearing evidence, return, in the form of a verdict, the average prices of grain sold in the county during the past year; the prices thus determined are called "Fiars."

Wages of Artisans.

East of Scotland.

Appendix to Report of Dr. *Harding*.

Abstract of Returns to printed Schedules issued by the Assistant-commissioner to the principal Employers of Artisans in the chief Towns in the District, relating to rates of Wages, and the effects of Combination amongst Workmen. 1838.

Kircaldy.

Foundery:

	Per week. s.	d.
Engineers	18	–
Journeymen machine-makers	16	6
„ blacksmiths	14	–
„ founders	19	6
„ pattern-makers	16	–
„ tin-smiths	17	–
Labourers	11	–

In May 1836 a strike took place amongst the engineers and machine-makers, in consequence of the masters' employing a workman not belonging to the union. Men were got from other trades, and machinery improved. Ultimately it is supposed to have lowered wages about one-tenth.

Cabinet-makers:

	Per week. s.	d.
Journeymen	14	9
Labourers	10	–
Females	5	–

Wages the same for 10 years past.

Bootmakers	17	–
Gentlemen's shoemakers	15	–
Ladies' - - ditto	15	–

Struck in 1836, and succeeded in raising wages nearly one-sixth, at which advance they have continued.

The working hours of these trades are about 60 per week. House-rent usually paid by them varies from 3 *l.* 10 *s.* to 5 *l.* per annum.

Masons:—Journeymen, 18 *s.* per week in summer; 15 *s.* in winter. Labourers, 11 *s.*—A strike in 1837 for three months, caused a very slight advance of wages.

Tailors, 10 *s.* per week: working hours 72 per week.—In 1825 a strike raised wages about 2 *s.* per week, at which advance they have remained.

Mill-spinners:—Adults, male, 12 *s.* per week; ditto females, 6 *s.*—No variation since 1826.

Flax-dressers:—Adults, male, 11 *s.* 6 *d.* per week. Working hours 66 and 69 per week.—No variation in wages since 1826.

Perth.

Tailors, first class, 12 *s.* 1 *d.* per week: second class, 10 *s.* 3 *d.*
Shoemakers, first class, 10 *s.* per week: second class, 7 *s.*
Binders, females, 3 *s.* 6 *d.* per week.
Working hours per week, 84.*
No variation in wages for the last eight or nine years.

Arbroath.

Mill-spinners (men), 15 *s.* 6 *d.* per week: ditto women, 6 *s.* 6 *d.*
Flax-dressers (men), per week, 14 *s.*
Working hours about 69 per week.

Montrose.

	s.	d.	
Joiners	15	–	per week.
Masons	17	–	„
Shoemakers	9	– to 10	*s.*
Day-labourers	10	–	„

[As stated by witnesses examined by the Assistant-commissioner.]

Forfar.

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* I much doubt the correctness of this statement.

East of Scotland.

Appendix to Report of Dr. *Harding*.

Forfar.

	s.	d.			
Masons - - -	18	–	-	-	per week.
Carpenters - -	14	–	to 15 *s.*		„
Shoemakers - -	12	–	-	-	„
Day-labourers -	10	–	to 12 *s.*		„

As stated by the witnesses examined by the Assistant-commissioner.

Brechine.

	s.	d.			
Masons - -	18	–	-	-	per week.
Carpenters - -	15	–	to 16 *s.*		„

ditto.

Dumfermline.

	s.	d.	Working Hours per Week.
Masons - - -	18	–	—
Quarriers - -	13	–	—
Labourers - -	10	–	—
Shoemakers: Average of six men, clear of deductions	9	4¼	84 to 90

	s.	d.	Working Hours per Week.
Flax-dressers - -	18	–	60
Millwrights - -	19	6	—
Joiners - - -	16	–	60
Sawyers - - -	20	–	72
Cabinet-makers -	17	–	—

[From Returns to printed Schedules.]

Cupar, Fife.

	s.	d.	
Masons:—In the year 1792 - - - - - -	9	–	per week.
„ 1810 - - - - - -	18	–	„
„ 1814 - - - - - -	14	–	„
„ 1819 - - - - - -	15	–	„
„ 1826 - - - - - -	17	–	„

Since 1826 they have varied from 13*s.* to 17*s.* per week.

	s.	d.	
Joiners:—1808 - - - - - - - -	15	–	per week.

Since, generally the same, except that they may have risen 1*s.* or 2*s.* per week in some years.

	s.	d.	
Cabinet-makers:—1808 - - - - - -	18	–	per week.

Since, 17*s.* or 18*s.*

Bakers:—From 1804 to the present time, 7*s.* or 8*s.* per week, besides food and lodging.

[Communicated by R. Methven, esq., Procurator Fiscal from information obtained from Tradesmen.]

In considering the effect produced by combination upon the wages of artisans, it should be borne in mind, that a very large proportion of them are in combination, although "strikes" are not very common. A "strike" is generally resorted to only when other means fail, and when there is, in the opinion of the workmen, a prospect, from local circumstances, of its being attended with success, and is generally employed only in disputes arising immediately and directly between them and their masters. The members of the Trades Unions generally exercise a complete control over all their fellow-workmen by other means, and thus keep up the rate of their wages, without its being at first sight obvious that they do so.

J. D. H.

East of Scotland.

Appendix to Report of Dr. *Harding*.

ABSTRACT of the Wages of Agricultural Labourers in several Counties in the District, compiled from the Answers returned to Letters written by the Assistant-commissioner to the several Sheriffs' Clerks, 1838.

Forfarshire.

Ordinary farm servants, 12*l.* in money yearly, with 6½ bolls of meal, milk and bedding. Average value of the whole, 28*l.* per annum.

Day agricultural labourers, 11*s.* per week, without any other allowance. Average yearly earnings, 28*l.* 12*s.*

Perthshire.

Ploughmen, 13*l.* in money; meal, milk and lodging. Average value of the whole, 25*l.* 7*s.* 3*d.* per annum.

Day or week labourers, 8*s.* per week in winter; 11*s.* ditto in summer. Average, 24*l.* 14*s.*

Stirlingshire.

About 10*s.* per week. Stone-breaking, job-work, from 10*s.* to 20*s.* a week.

Kinross-shire.

1*s.* 8*d.* per day for eight months, 1*s.* 4*d.* ditto for four months, in the year. Women 6*d.*, and 9*d.* during the same periods.

Domestic female servants, occasionally employed in agriculture, 5*l.* per annum, living in their masters' families.

Aberdeen.

Day-labourers, 2*d.* to 2½*d.* per hour; women, 1*d.* per hour.

Clackmannanshire.

Ploughmen and labourers, employed by the year, including meal, house-rent, and all other perquisites, 9*s.* 6*d.* per week.

Labourers employed by the week or month, 10*s.* per week.

Fifeshire.

From 10*s.* to 11*s.* per week.

Elgin.

Day-labourers, from 7*s.* 6*d.* to 8*s.* per week in winter; from 8*s.* 6*d.* to 9*s.* per week in summer.

Sutherland.

Day-labourers, 1*s.* per day; women and boys, 6*d.* per day.

East of Scotland.

Appendix to Report of Dr. *Harding*.

REMARKS upon the Fabrics, Wages and Condition of the WEAVERS in some of the principal Weaving Towns in the District, 1838.

DUMFERMLINE.

EXTRACTS from a written Statement delivered by the Weavers.

Looms belonging to single men	475
,, ,, married men	2,098
,, ,, warehousemen	156
,, ,, manufacturers	218
Total	2,947

Owners of looms who work and who are unmarried	279
,, ,, ,, married	695
Journeymen unmarried	762
,, married	231
Apprentices bound	44
,, unbound	554
Married weavers	926
Amount of families married	4,422
Of these, work at the loom	1,394
,, wind pirns	1,155
Not of age	1,873

Observe here, that those who have gone to other trades, are not included in the amount of family.

Idle looms	617
Idle hands	175

[Compiled by Messrs. Strachan, Halley & Dickson, weavers.]

EXTRACTS from a printed Statement, published by the Weavers' Committee 1838.

No. 1. shows the proportions of the various kinds of work, taken from the statistica account of the trade, made out in July 1836.

No. 2. the wages earned per week, from the average of several warehouses.

	No. 1. Looms.	No. 2. Wages.
		s. *d.*
3-4ths to 6-4ths 40 threes and coarser	437	6 11
,, ,, finer than 40 threes	452	9 $3\frac{1}{4}$
7-4ths and 8-4ths 40 threes and coarser	960	9 $6\frac{1}{2}$
,, ,, finer than 40 threes	528	12 1
9-4ths and broader 40 threes and coarser	135	9 $8\frac{3}{4}$
,, ,, finer than 40 threes	236	15 $4\frac{3}{8}$
	2,748	62 $11\frac{7}{8}$
Looms employed on other work	771	10 6
	3,519	
Journeymen's wages, 7*s.* 6*d.*		

These averages are taken during the time the webs are in the loom; no deduction of wage is made for beaming the web, or the time lost waiting on work.

The average of the above six classes is 10*s.* 6*d.* per week for each loom. For the information of those not conversant with the practice of the trade, the journeymen receive nearly three-fourths of the income, making the weaving wage 7*s.* 6*d.* per week; the remainder being

being the master's remuneration for the cost of the loom, rent, &c. and the trouble of providing and superintending the work. The cheapest kind of damask loom, with machine, will cost about 10*l.* sterling; from this to 20*l.*; and those engaged in the broader and finer work, from 20*l.* to 40*l.*, and in some cases 45*l.*

In 1822 the number of looms employed was 1,800; in July 1836 these had increased to 3,519 (only 24 being idle for want of hands), and in August 1837 they amounted to 3,700.*

The underneath shows how and when the wages were reduced:—

	50 Threes per Spindle.	45 Threes per Spindle.
	s. *d.*	*s.* *d.*
1807	7 $8\frac{1}{8}$	6 $3\frac{1}{16}$
1816	6 $3\frac{1}{4}$	5 $1\frac{7}{16}$
1822	5 $-\frac{2}{3}$	3 $11\frac{5}{16}$
1825	5 $5\frac{1}{4}$	4 $2\frac{11}{16}$
1826	5 $-\frac{2}{3}$	3 $11\frac{5}{16}$
1828	4 $6\frac{1}{16}$	3 7
1830	4 1	3 $3\frac{7}{8}$
1836	3 10	2 $9\frac{1}{4}$

The net weekly average of weavers' wages was stated by themselves at 7*s.* 6*d.*

Of 184 members of the Equitable Friendly Society, 114 are weavers.

Of 100 members of the Philanthropic Society, 69 are weavers.

There are three other benefit societies.

The public and circulating libraries in Dumfermline contain collectively upwards of 5,100 volumes. The "Tradesmen's Library" is the largest, containing 1,700 volumes: of 188 of its readers, 118 are weavers. About 450 weavers are regular readers at one or other of these libraries.

The following statement will give some idea of the comparative number of readers of some of the most popular newspapers and periodicals:

Chambers' Edinburgh Journal	263
Scotsman	262
Tait's Magazine	110
Edinburgh Chronicle	97
Scottish Pilot	84
Birmingham Journal	71
Voluntary Church Magazine	71
Wilson's Tales of the Borders	64
London Weekly Dispatch	55

There were a number of others, but these were the most generally read.

[From a written Statement by Messrs. Dickson, Halley, Strachan & Adamson, weavers.]

* In December 1837, there were idle 900 looms and 500 hands; and on 9th February 1838, there were 550 looms and 139 hands.

East of Scotland.

Appendix to Report of Dr. *Harding*.

Wages.

PERTH.

PRICES of weaving Pullicates at *Perth* from 1801 to 1838.

[Furnished by *G. L. Cornfute*, esq.]

Period.	PER ELL. No. 1. 10⁰⁰ 32 Inches.	No. 2. 11⁰⁰ 32 Inches.	No. 3. 12⁰⁰ 32 Inches.	Meal per Boll.
	s. d.	*s. d.*	*s. d.*	*s. d.*
1801	– 4			
1803	– 3½			
1808	– 4			
1809	– 4¾			
1810	– 2¾			
1812	– 3½			
1813	– 4			
January - 1816	– 3¼			
March - 1816	– 1¾			
November 1816	– 1¼ - (never known lower.)			
1819	– 1¼			
1820	– 2	- - -	- - -	15 9
1821	– 1¾			
April - - 1822	– 2	– 2¼	– 2½	14 –
May - - 1823	– 1⅞	– 2	– 2¼	18 8
March - - 1824	– 2	– 2⅛	– 2½	
December - 1825	– 2¼	– 2⅜	– 2⅝	19 –
August - - 1826	– 1¼	– 1½	– 2	26 9
September - 1827	– 2⅛	– 2⅜	– 2⅝	16 –
October - - 1828	– 2⅛	– 2½	– 2¾	18 –
1829	– 1½	– 1¾	– 2	
1830	– 1⅝	– 1⅞	– 2⅛	
November - 1831	– 1⅝	– 1⅞	– 2⅛	
1832	– 1½	– 1¾	– 2	14 –
December - 1833	– 1½	– 1¾	– 2	
March - - 1834	– 1⅝	– 1⅞	– 2⅛	
1835	– 1⅞	– 2⅛	– 2½	16 –
May - - 1836	– 1⅞	– 2⅛	– 2½	21 5
May - - 1837	– 2	– 2¼	– 2½	
May - - 1838	– 1⅝	– 1⅞	– 2⅛	
July - - 1838	– 1⅝	– 2	– 2¼	

LOOMS.

663 umbrella ginghams.
523 pullicates, checks, &c. } for Glasgow.
169 shawls - - - }

TOTAL - - - 1,355

Average net WEEKLY WAGES.

	s.	*d.*
Shawls, 14⁰⁰ 5/4, 1½ cover - - - - - - -	8	1
Umbrella ginghams, 1st class - - - - - -	6	4
Ditto - - - 2d class, women, &c. - - - -	5	4
Pullicates, &c. 1st class - - - - - - -	6	8
Ditto - - 2d class, women, &c. - - - - -	4	8
Ditto - - 3d class, old people and children - - -	3	2

The umbrella gingham manufacture has been established about 30 years. The demand is rather increasing. The other fabrics depend entirely on Glasgow.

In 1800, a 14⁰⁰ 5/4 umbrella gingham was paid 24 *s.* per cut of 24 yards; the same is now 8 *s.* 6 *d.*

Of 123 weavers' children (according to a written statement made out from personal inquiry by a weaver):

75 were without education.
48 attended schools.
20 were destitute of decent clothing for attending public worship.

[It is presumed that the whole number were of an age fit for attendance at school, but this is not stated.]

The

The chief officer of police said the weavers were remarkable for their good conduct. Embezzlement is quite unknown; their cottages generally show signs of great poverty; the number of looms is decreasing; in 1819 there were about 2,400 in the city; very few have looms of their own. East of Scotland. Appendix to Report of Dr. *Harding*.

DUNDEE.

At the request of Dr. Harding, one of the Assistant Commissioners, Mr. Easson has submitted the following:— Wages.

"Dear Sir, Dundee, August 21, 1388.

"In compliance with your request, I herewith send you a Table, showing the prices which have been paid for weaving cotton bagging and hempen sacking, from January 1819 to July 1838; and, as you put a question to me at the public examination, which seemed to imply that you thought that manufacturers would regulate the price of weaving in some measure by the price of food, I have also engrossed the prices of two leading articles of food for the same period.

"The prices of oatmeal are for the peck of 8¾ lib., except from April 1830 to July 1831, January and April 1835, and January 1837 to July 1838: the prices under these dates are for the imperial stone.

"The rates paid for cotton bagging* and sacking may be regarded as a fair specimen of the rates paid for all the other fabrics that are wove in factories. These are leading articles, and the rate for weaving one fabric is generally regulated by that of another. It is impossible to get any one fabric wove for any length of time if it is not paid in proportion to other fabrics.

"I have merely to say, in conclusion, that I cannot see that it would be a hardship upon manufacturers to have to pay the weavers by measure, under proper and clearly-defined regulations, instead of by the piece, as has been the practice hitherto. I am aware, however, that there are many difficulties in the way; but they are not insurmountable.

"I am, dear sir, your obedient servant,

"*Alex. Easson.*"

"To Dr. Harding."

Table, showing the Prices of weaving Cotton Bagging and Sacking per Piece, from January 1819 to August 1838. Wages.

Year.	Cotton Bagging.				1¼ and 1½ lb. Sacking.			
	Jan.	April.	July.	Oct.	Jan.	April.	July.	Oct.
	s. d.	*s. d.*	*s. d.*	*s. d.*	*s. d.*	*s. d.*	*s. d.*	*s. d.*
1819	4 3	4 6	4 –	4 –	—	—	—	—
1820	4 3	4 –	4 –	4 3	4 6	4 6	4 6	4 6
1821	5 –	5 –	5 –	5 6	—	—	—	—
1822	5 6	6 6	6 6	6 6	—	—	—	—
1823	5 –	5 –	5 –	5 –	5 –	—	—	—
1824	5 –	5 6	6 –	5 6	—	—	—	—
1825	5 –	5 6	6 6	6 –	5 6	6 –	6 6	6 –
1826	5 6	4 6	4 –	4 –	6 –	5 –	4 6	4 6
1827	4 –	4 –	4 –	4 6	4 6	4 6	4 6	5 –
1828	4 6	4 6	4 6	4 6	5 –	5 –	5 –	5 –
1829	4 –	4 –	4 –	4 –	5 –	5 –	4 6	4 6
1830	4 –	4 –	4 –	4 –	4 6	4 6	4 6	4 6
1831	4 –	4 –	4 –	4 –	4 6	4 9	5 –	4 6
1832	4 6	4 3	4 3	4 3	4 6	4 9	4 9	4 6
1833	4 6	4 6	4 9	5 3	4 6	4 9	4 9	5 6
1834	5 6	5 6	5 6	5 9	5 9	5 9	5 9	6 –
1835	5 3	5 3	6 –	6 3	5 3	5 3	6 3	6 6
1836	6 –	6 –	6 –	6 –	6 3	6 3	6 3	6 –
1837	5 –	4 6	- -	- -	5 –	4 9	4 6	4 6
1838	4 –	4 3	4 6	- -	4 6	4 6	5 –	—

Table

* For the information of persons not conversant with the trade, it should be stated, that cotton bagging is so called from the use to which it is applied. It is a linen fabric.

East of Scotland.

Appendix to Report of Dr. *Harding*.

TABLE, showing the Prices of OATMEAL and WHEATEN BREAD, from January 1819 to August 1838.

Year.	Oatmeal.								Bread per Quartern Loaf.			
	Jan.		April.		July.		Oct.		Jan.		April.		July.		Oct.	
	s.	*d.*	*s.*	*d.*	*s.*	*d.*	*s.*	*d.*	*s.*	*d.*	*s.*	*d.*	*s.*	*d.*	*s.*	*d.*
1819	1 4	to 1 6	1 4	to 1 6	1	3	1	1	1	–	–	11	–	10	–	9
1820	–	–	–	–	–	–	1	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
1821	–	1 –	–	1 2	1	2	1	–	–	8	–	8	–	9	–	9
1822	–	1 –	–	1 –	1	–	1	–	–	9	–	8	–	8	–	7
1823	–	1 –	–	1 1	1	1	1	1	–	6½	–	8	–	8	–	8
1824	–	1 3	–	1 4	1	5	1	3	–	9	–	9	–	8	–	9
1825	–	1 2	–	1 3	1	3	1	4	–	9	–	9	–	9	–	10
1826	–	1 3	–	1 5	1	6	1	6	–	9	–	8	–	9	–	9
1827	–	1 5	–	1 5	1	4	1	2	–	8	–	8	–	8	–	9
1828	–	1 1	–	1 1	1	2	1	2	–	8	–	7	–	8	–	10
1829	–	1 2	–	1 2	1	3	1	2	–	10	–	10	–	9	–	10
1830	–	1 1	–	1 9	2	4	1	10	–	9	–	9	–	9	–	9
1831	–	2 2	–	2 2	2	2	1	3	–	9	–	10	–	9	–	9
1832	–	1 2	–	1 2	1	2	1	–	–	8	–	9	–	9	–	8
1833	–	1 –	–	1 –	–	11	1	–	–	8	–	7	–	7	–	7
1834	–	1 –	–	1 –	1	1	1	–	–	7	–	7	–	7	–	6
1835	–	1 7	–	1 7	1	3	1	–	–	6	–	6	–	6	–	5
1836	–	1 1	–	1 10	2	–	2	2	–	6	–	6	–	7	–	8
1837	–	2 4	–	2 4	2	4	1	10	–	8	–	8	–	7	–	7
1838	–	1 10	–	2 –	2	–	–	–	–	7	–	8	–	9	—	

EXTRACTS from a Report of the Evidence given before the Assistant-commissioner at *Dundee*.—(Printed in a Dundee Newspaper.)

Number of Weavers.—The number of weavers in Dundee is from four to five thousand, all engaged on linen fabrics. This was ascertained about the year 1834, from the number of signatures attached to a petition in favour of payment by the yard. The number that signed this petition was 4,673, about 700 of whom resided in Lochee.

Amount of Wages.—The account which the witnesses gave on this point rather varied, but they agreed that the average was about 8*s.* per week, clear of deductions, which might amount to about 1*s.* 1½*d.* per week to those working in factories, and 1*s.* 8½*d.* to those working in their own premises. The difference of wages made at different fabrics was from 1*s.* to 2*s.* per week.

Rate of Wages.—The preceding Table affords very clear data by which to judge of the rise and fall in wages during the period embraced. Mr. Easson stated, that, taking the average of 10 men's work (160 pieces) for eight weeks in May and June 1837, and deducting the charge for winding the weft, the average to each per week was 8*s.* 1⅜*d.** For February and March 1838 (202 pieces), the average was 9*s.* 3⅛*d.* This he considered a fair average of the earnings of the factory weavers.

Increase of Drinking.—The general opinion seemed to be that drinking had increased considerably, especially since the reduction of the duties on spirits.

Church-going Habits of the Weavers.—The general opinion was, that this was rather on the decrease.

Condition.

General Knowledge of Weavers.—Two or three witnesses thought this increasing, but there were no book-clubs among weavers; numbers of them, however, belonged to libraries which were established in town. One witness said that political knowledge was at any rate increasing, as newspaper reading was far more prevalent than formerly.

Education of Children.—This was hardly so well attended to as formerly; but education was very much improved, and very cheap at the sessional schools; the charge of these seminaries was 2*d.* a week; at other schools 4*d.* or 5*d.* for reading, writing and arithmetic.

Time of Marrying among Weavers.—The witnesses rather differed on this point, their statements varying from 22 to 27 years of age. The average might be fairly taken at 25. One witness remarked that marriages were not so early here as he had noticed them to be in the west country. Another said that Malthusian principles were on the increase.

Remedies for the low Rate of Wages.—The universal opinion of the witnesses was, that the corn-laws were to blame for the greater part of their sufferings, by raising the price of food, and depressing the wages of weavers in particular, as they had most to do with the foreign market. No doubt but great relief would be afforded them by the repeal of these laws, and a more equal system of taxation, and by a repeal of the heavy pressure of taxes in general, occasioned by that *thing* called the National Debt.

Boards

* The average for 27 weeks, of the net weekly earnings of five steady weavers, in another factory, was 9*s.*

East of Scotland.

Boards of Trade.—The Commissioner then asked Mr. Buik whether, in giving evidence before the House of Commons' Committee, he had represented the opinions of the weavers, or merely stated his own opinions?—Mr. Buik replied, that he had, on the subject of boards of trade, represented the opinions of the weavers; on all others he had given his own. Commissioner. "Then there must have been a considerable change of opinion, for he now found that none of them referred to boards of trade as a remedy." He wished their opinion on the subject. Mr. Buik thought that boards of trade were perfectly Utopian. Mr. Hay said that they would be at the best useless, as in times of scarcity of work workmen would be willing to evade them, and work under the rates. The Commissioner then read an extract from Dr. Bowring's evidence as to the practical working of some institutions of the same kind at Lyons, which strongly supported the views which had been expressed by Messrs. Buik and Hay. The general opinion seemed to be, that no relief could be got by any regulation to fix wages.

Appendix to Report of Dr. *Harding*.

Emigration.—Mr. Buik thought that an extensive system of emigration would lessen the distress. The Commissioner said that was his own opinion; but he found the weavers in general did not like it. Some discussion took place among the witnesses on this point, and the general opinion seemed to be—"abolish the corn-laws, and we can get a comfortable living here."

Extracts from the Answers returned by *John B. Baxter*, Esq., Procurator Fiscal of Forfarshire, at Dundee, to written Questions.

Combination.

"I have no reason to think that the hand-loom weavers in Dundee are presently in combination. They were so, two or three years ago, when they struck work, and continued without working for, I think, nearly three months; many of them then suffered great privations; at length they were wearied out, and were necessitated to return to their employment. No acts of positive aggression were reported to me. I understood at the time, that the weavers failed in attaining the objects they had in view, and gained no rise of wages or other concessions from their employers. So numerous is the body of weavers, and so easy is it to learn the trade, that it is very difficult to form and sustain an effectual combination among the hand-loom weavers. There have been many other trades in combination within my recollection, such as the joiners, flax-dressers, carpenters, founders, tailors, printers, shoemakers, masons, &c. I have not sufficient information to enable me to state the terms, periods and results of such combinations, although I believe they have been generally much more successful in attaining the objects they had in view than the weavers. Those objects were, chiefly, a rise of wages, and the insisting upon the observance of certain rules and regulations among themselves as to the taking of apprentices."

KIRKALDY.

Number of Looms:

In Dysart parish	1,761
Kirkaldy	245
Abbotshall	709
Total	2,775

Statement of Weekly Wages (after allowing for necessary deductions) agreed upon at a Meeting of Manufacturers and Weavers, held in the Town Hall, August 8th, 1838.

Wages.

Linen Ticks.

	s.	d.
Stout men, at the finest fabrics (42 and 45 porter)	8	3
Ditto, second class (36 and 40 „)	7	9
Older men and boys (28 and 34 „)	5	9
Making an average of	7	3

Fine Sheetings.

Stout men, at finest fabrics (40 porter, $^5/_4$ and upwards)	6	6
Older men, boys and women (36 „ $^4/_4$ „)	5	4
Making an average of	5	11

Dowlas.

Men and young women, 10^{00} and 13^{00}, $^4/_4$	6	6
Lads and women 34 and 45 porter, 30 inches	4	6
Boys and girls, apprentices, 26 and 32 „ 25 „	3	0

Sail-cloth.

Heavy work (in factories), stout men	9	3

Average hours of labour, 12 and 13.

The average deductions from the gross wages (which are here allowed for) will be about 1*s.* 9*d.* per week.

East of Scotland.

Appendix to Report of Dr. *Harding*.

The net average weekly wages of 20 hand-loom weavers employed by Messrs. Ninian Lockhart & Sons, on cotton shirting stripes, from January to June 1838, was 8*s.* 9½*d.*

Of 47 children of weavers employed by Mr. John Bremner, according to the personal inquiry of that gentleman, 11 were not at school, 20 were at school, 11 were infants, and 5 were employed in weaving.

Condition.

The state of education generally amongst the weavers' children is good. Mr. Forrester's school is one of the best I ever saw. There is a very large fund applicable to education. The proportion of children educated is probably greater, rather than less, than that shown by the above statement. The moral and intellectual condition of the weavers is very good, nor is there much actual distress apparent; but embezzlement prevails to some extent.

ABERDEEN.

Fabrics.

The number of looms in Aberdeen is about—

1,000	employed	on	linen, four-fifths in factories.
130	-	-	cotton, all out-door work.
300	-	-	woollen carpets, all in factories.
1,430			

The number of linen and cotton looms is diminishing, the manufacturers having generally turned their attention to power-loom weaving and spinning: the woollen (carpet) manufacture is on the increase. It is almost entirely for the home market. None of the carpet-weavers appeared before the Assistant Commissioner. They work about 60 hours a week on the average, and earn from 12*s.* to 15*s.* (net) per week. Some can earn even more. It is rather heavy work, but cotton-weavers can learn it in three months' time. Apprentices are taken by verbal agreement for three years; they pay 2*d.* out of each shilling of their earnings, but they often run away before that time expires.

Wages.

The average net weekly wages of linen-weavers may be stated as follows:—

	s.	*d.*
1st class (32 porter duck, 27 inches, 5½ spindles) - -	11	–
2d class - - - - - - - - - -	8	6
Old and inferior hands - - - - - -	4	6

They work on the average about 69 hours a-week, but the best paid often work irregularly.

The wages of 25 weavers employed by Messrs. Milne, Cruden & Co., gave this average: 1st class, 13*s.* 11*d.*; 2d class, 8*s.* 3¾*d.*; 3d class, 5*s.* 7¼*d.*

Cotton-weavers' net weekly wages:—

	s.	*d.*
1st class (four-fourths check, 10⁰⁰ stripe) - - - -	6	3
Inferior hands - - - - - - - -	4	6

TABLE of WAGES furnished by Messrs. *Richards*, & Co.

LINEN.

	38 Porter Dowlas, 25½ Inches, 57 Ells, 62 Yards of Cloth.		32 Porter Dowlas, 25½ Inches, 60 Ells, 66 Yards of Cloth.	
	s.	*d.*	*s.*	*d.*
1826	8	9	—	
1827	8	6	—	
1828	8	6	—	
1829	8	2	6	4
1830	7	6	6	1
1831	7	10	6	1
1832	7	10	6	4
1833	7	6	6	4
1834	7	3	6	–
1835	7	3	6	–
1836	from 7	9	from 6	2
	to 9	2	to 7	4
1837	7	9	6	7
1838	7	4	6	2

Shop-room and looms are found over and above these prices.

PRICES

Prices of Weaving Cotton in Aberdeen.

	£.	s.	d.
In 1815, 8°°, 54 ells per cut, 29 inches - - -	–	18	3
1825, ditto ditto - - ditto - - -	–	11	0
1838, ditto 60 ells ditto - ditto - - -	–	7	9
1815, 9°°, 57 ells per cut, 30 inches - - -	1	4	–
1825, ditto ditto - - ditto - - -	–	13	9
1838, ditto 60 ells ditto - ditto - - -	–	8	6

[Furnished by Mr. David Ewen, weaver.]

The wages of the carpet-weavers have been quite steady for several years past.

It will be perceived that the earnings of the weavers in Aberdeen are higher than those in almost any other place in the district; but, from living in a large city, their dwellings by no means present that appearance of comfort which might be expected. Benefit societies are hardly known: there is a good deal of intemperance, but apparently very little embezzlement. They have peculiar facilities for educating their children, but they do not avail themselves of them to the extent which could be desired. Any actual distress amongst the woollen or linen weavers must be the result of their own improvidence. The cotton-weavers are in a state barely removed from distress.

The following abstract of a written statement delivered by Mr. John Galloway, a very respectable weaver, will, however, show that the fall in wages is severely felt:—

In 1825 his net wages for a 46 porter dowlas, 30 inches, 59 mill-ells, were 13*s*. Of this, he expended per annum,

	£.	s.	d.
House-rent - - - - - - - -	3	–	–
Fire and light - - - - - - - -	2	10	–
Education for three children - - - - -	1	18	–
Church-sitting - - - - - - - -	–	10	–
Shoes for six persons - - - - - -	1	10	–
£.	9	8	–

which he was enabled to pay by the produce of about 14½ weeks' labour, leaving that of 37½ weeks to provide food and clothing. In the same fabric the net weekly wages do not now amount to more than 8*s*. The portion of his expenditure detailed above is very nearly (necessarily) the same, but can only be provided for by the produce of 23 weeks' labour, leaving that of 29 weeks to provide food and clothing. Oatmeal, the staple article of food, is said to be dearer this year than in 1825.

ARBROATH.

The number of looms is about 2,000, all on *linen*: 500 of these are employed in factories on canvas. The principal market is England. The number of looms is rather increasing than diminishing. The net weekly wages of canvas-weavers in factories are about 8*s*. 6*d*.; some can earn 11*s*.

Wages of small-loom weavers, including many women and old men, about 5*s*. 6*d*.

The average in Arbroath cannot be less than 7*s*. Wages have been tolerably steady for several years past, excepting a sudden fall in 1826 to their present rate. They have never been lower than at present.

The moral and physical condition of the weavers offers no peculiarities. In their opinion, a regulation of a minimum rate of wages, by any kind of board of trade, would be "a nuisance."

	s.	d.	
In 1816, a 32 porter dowlas, 27 inches, was paid	19	–	per piece.
In 1826 - - ditto - - ditto - - -	16	–	ditto.
In 1838 - - ditto - - ditto - - -	10	6	ditto.

KIRRIEMUIR.

The number of looms is about 2,000, employed on dowlas, sheeting and Osnaburghs, principally for exportation. Dundee and Forfar are their immediate markets, and supply most of the work. The number is rather diminishing.

The best hands earn about 8*s*. net per week.
Inferior hands - - 6*s*. - ditto
Old people and boys - 4*s*. - ditto.

Perhaps 5*s*. 6*d*. may be the net weekly average of all the looms. A great fall in wages took place in 1826. The weavers are decidedly opposed to any board for regulating wages, and insisted much upon the necessity for universal suffrage, arguing that the fact of this Commission being issued, showed that they were not adequately represented in the Legislature. There are considerable funds (about 9,000*l*.) applicable to education, which is by no means neglected. No other trade but that of weaving is carried on in the town. They seem poor, but not in actual distress.

FORFAR.

East of Scotland.

Appendix to Report of Dr. *Harding*.

FORFAR.

TABLE of PRICES of Weaving in Forfar from 1824 to 1838 inclusive.

Wages.

Years.	PER PIECE.			
	24 Porter Osnaburgh.	26 Porter Osnaburgh, 4/4	26 P. Tow Sheeting, 4/4	30 P. Flax Sheeting,
	£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.
1824	– 12 –	– 14 –	– 13 –	—
1825	– 11 –	– 13 –	– 12 –	—
1826	– 8 –	– 9 –	– 8 –	—
1827	– 9 –	– 10 –	– 8 6	—
1828	– 10 –	– 11 6	– 10 6	—
1829	– 8 –	– 9 –	– 9 –	—
1830	– 8 –	– 9 –	– 9 –	—
1831	– 8 –	– 9 –	– 9 –	—
1832	– 7 –	– 8 –	– 8 –	—
1833	– 8 –	– 9 –	– 9 –	—
1834	– 8 –	– 9 –	– 9 –	– 10 6
1835	– 8 –	– 9 –	– 9 –	– 11 –
1836	– 10 6	– 11 6	– 11 –	– 13 6
1837	– 8 –	– 9 –	– 8 –	– 10 –
1838	– 7 –	– 8 –	– 8 –	– 10 –

[Furnished by Mr. David Littlejohn, Manufacturer.]

Fabrics.

The number of looms is about 2,830. Of these, 2,569 are employed on various common linen fabrics. The rest were not at work. Hardly any work is done in factories. The average of working hours per week is not above 66.

Wages.

The average of net weekly wages may be as follows:—

1st class - - - - - - 7*s.* 6 *d.* (some can earn more.)
2d class - - - - - - 6*s.*

Old people, women, &c. from 2*s.* 6*d.* to 4*s.*

Condition.

Education is encouraged by pecuniary assistance from the Municipal Corporation; and there is a large infant school, well conducted. There is also a mechanic's institute, and books are easily obtained (for perusal) by the weavers.

There is unfortunately a good deal of embezzlement; nor do the manufacturers appear as anxious to check or punish it as might be expected: at the public examination of the witnesses selected by the body of manufacturers, there seemed a remarkable reluctance to state their opinion on the subject, and an evident wish to conceal its extent.

I cannot report favourably of the moral habits of the weavers.

Embezzlement.

The following extract, from a letter dated the 22d August 1837, written by the procurator-fiscal of the town to the procurator-fiscal of the county, on the subject of a prosecution for embezzlement, places the subject in its true light, and the description of the system applies generally to almost all considerable towns in the district:—

"A species of dishonesty has been gaining ground in this town for years past, and it has now arrived at such an alarming extent, that those guilty of it stand greatly in need of a check and warning. There are several thousands of journeymen weavers and winders of yarn in this town and its neighbourhood, and a great many of them are in the practice of retaining a small quantity of the yarn entrusted to their charge, and of selling the quantity retained at an under-value. The winders purloin the warp, and the weavers the weft, entrusted to their charge. There are generally from seven to 10 spindles of warp given out to be winded for the different fabrics of cloth manufactured in this town; and the practice with several of the winders is, to retain and not account for a half warp, or a greater or less quantity; and the weavers receive a like quantity of weft to be put on their webs, with which they are entrusted to weave by the manufacturers; but instead of driving all the weft into their webs, the weavers retain a similar quantity as that done by the winders, and both of them send their children with the embezzled yarns to sell to receivers of stolen goods. A system of crime thus prevails among the operative classes of our community, and the demoralization of their children is fearfully on the increase. The manufacturers are almost every week preferring complaints before the magistrates of the town on this subject."

BRECHINE.

BRECHINE.

THE number of looms is 870; all on linen; canvas, dowlas and sheetings. About a third of the produce is for the French market. The number of looms has increased about one-third since 1824. Fabric.

The net weekly wages are as follows:— Wages.

	s.	d.	s.	d.
Canvas weavers - - - - - -	from 9	6	to 10	–
Able-bodied men, at dowlas and sheeting - - - -			8	4
Average of all the male weavers - - - - -			6	9
Average of all the looms - - - - - - -			5	8

	s.	d.	
In 1825 a 28 porter dowlas was paid	16	6	per piece (about 130 yards).
In 1828 - - ditto - -	12	6	
In 1839 - - ditto - -	9	6	(the piece being now 150 yards).

Extract from a written Statement delivered by the Manufacturers, and agreed to by the Weavers.

"The weavers work, on an average, about 12 to 13 hours a day; some more, and perhaps this may be under. The deductions for winding, &c., will be about 20 per cent. The house which a weaver occupies generally will cost about 50*s.* yearly. Condition.

"Boys commence to work from 10 to 12 years of age. The apprenticeship of a weaver varies from six months to two years. Those from 6 to 12 months pay the master 3*l.* Those who are apprenticed two years pay one-third of their clear gain.

"Some weavers make superior work to others, and this can in a great measurebe accounted for, from the circumstance of such having been properly trained. There ought to be no shorter apprenticeships than two years, commencing at 12 years of age.

"The trade having been in such a depressed state for some time, has been caused by a variety of circumstances; among these may be mentioned the depressed state of America, the duties on corn, timber, articles of French produce, and others, which prevent the free interchange of our goods for those produced in other countries.

"The houses of the weavers are, in general, very poorly furnished.

"As a class, the weavers are regular in their attendance at public worship.

"The food generally used by the weaver and his family consists of oatmeal, potatoes and other vegetables, and fish: very seldom do they get any butcher's meat.

"The weavers are, in general, of sober habits, particularly those who are married. The weavers' families are, in general, much better educated than we could suppose their means would warrant.

"The moral habits of the weaving population are improved.

"Some of the weavers leave their occupation and learn other trades, principally with a view of bettering their condition. A weaver has, taking a whole year, about the same wages as a common labourer, but considerably less than a mason, blacksmith, and some other handicrafts.

"The weavers are, in general, well clothed; much better than they were 20 years ago.

"The weavers and manufacturers would wish to see a board of trade established, composed of delegates chosen in equal numbers by each body, with power to settle disputes as to the quantity and quality of the work, but without any power to regulate wages."

MONTROSE.

THERE are from 500 to 600 looms, five-sixths of which are in factories; they are all employed on the finer and heavier linen fabrics—dowlas, sheetings, sailcloth and bagging. Fabrics.

The average net weekly earnings of all classes of weavers was stated by them to be 6*s.* 8*d.*; but as stated by the manufacturers, and corroborated by the examination of their books, was from 7*s.* 6*d.* to 8*s.* 6*d.* Saturday afternoon and Monday are generally idle days; the average of working hours per week may be about 70. Embezzlement has been only lately suspected. Intemperance always increases with any advance of wages. The weavers here were on remarkably good terms with their emyloyers, to whose liberality they consider themselves much indebted. They find little difficulty in getting an advance of wages, without disputes, whenever the state and prospects of the trade are good. Wages. Condition.

East of Scotland.

Appendix to Report of Dr. *Harding*.

AUCHTERARDER.

Fabrics. Wages. Condition.

THERE are about 500 looms, all employed by Glasgow houses in weaving (cotton fabrics) pullicates, ginghams and stripes.

The average net weekly earnings are about 4*s.* 2*d.* The very best hands can earn 7*s.* 8*d.*; and about one-fifth of the whole can earn 4*s.* 9*d.* The number of looms is decreasing. Very little embezzlement takes place. The main article of diet is potatoes. The farmers, since the introduction of bone-dust manure, begin to object to these being cultivated in their fields by the weavers. Their condition is one of great privation and occasional distress. They are opposed to any attempt to fix the rate of wages by law. Many of them would emigrate if they had the means of doing so. Their general conduct is very orderly and respectable.

NEWBURGH.

Fabrics. Wages.

ABOUT 600 looms. This number is steadily, but slowly increasing. All on linen fabrics, for resident manufacturers, principally dowlas and sheetings.

Average net weekly wages:—First class (about 20 superior hands, employed on broad sheetings), 10*s.* 6*d.*; good workmen, 7*s.* 6*d.*; ordinary hands, 4*s.* 6*d.*; inferior, old persons, &c., 4*s.*

There is also a considerable quantity of "winding" done by the women and children for the neighbouring villages for 10 miles round, which are supplied with work from Newburgh. The wages have been steady for seven or eight years past, excepting a temporary advance in 1836. The average of several men, indiscriminately taken from the manufacturers' books, was 6*s.* 9*d.* net weekly earnings. Their moral and intellectual condition presents no peculiarities.

KINROSS.

Fabrics. Wages. Condition.

ABOUT 400 looms, 350 on (cotton) pullicates, and some mousseline de laine, for Glasgow houses; 50 (woollen) plaid shawls, recently introduced, and employed by Glasgow houses.

Average net weekly wages:—Cotton-weavers, first class, 4*s.* 6*d.*; second class, 3*s.* Woollen-weavers, 14*s.* 3*d.* The rate of cotton-weavers' wages may appear almost incredibly low; but it was computed after an examination of many individual cases in the agent's book, corroborated by the evidence of the witnesses.

The wages of woollen-weaving are kept up by an agreement amongst the employers here; they fear that a deterioration of the fabric might be the effect of any reduction.

Embezzlement prevails to a considerable extent.

Potatoes, meal, and some milk, compose the diet of cotton-weavers; they hardly ever taste meat. The education of their children is by no means neglected; and notwithstanding their extreme poverty, their general conduct is very creditable to them.

CUPAR (FIFE).

Fabrics. Wages.

THERE are about 667 looms in the town and suburbs, and perhaps 500 in the neighbouring village of Ceres. They are all employed on linen sheetings, dowlas, and osnaburghs.

The average of net weekly wages is about 4*s.* 7*d.*

The weavers hardly ever eat meat; many cannot afford even meal and milk twice a-day; potatoes form the principal article of food.

AUCHTERMUCHTY.

Fabrics. Wages. Condition.

THERE are about 1,000 looms in the parish. Between 50 and 100 of these are employed on cotton for Glasgow and Aberdeen. Eight employed on woollen fabrics, for Tillicoultry, near Stirling, and earn about 14*s.* per week; and the rest on the ordinary linen fabrics, nearly half of them for Newburgh manufacturers.

Average net weekly wages:—Highest class, 3*d.*; ordinary, 4*s.* 6*d.* Cotton checks were paid in 1815, 6*d.* per ell; they are 3*d.* per ell: 10⁰⁰ dowlases were paid in 1826, 26*s.* per web of 120 ells; they are now 19*s.* per web of 120 ells.

It was stated by the witnesses, that attendance on Divine worship is less regular than formerly, and that the education of the children had deteriorated. Much discontent and irritation of feeling appeared to prevail, and a stronger disposition to turbulence than at any other place in the district.

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RETURN to an Address of the Honourable The House of Commons, dated 15 February 1839;—*for*,

COPIES of certain REPORTS of the ASSISTANT HAND-LOOM WEAVERS' COMMISSIONERS.

REPORTS

FROM

Assistant Hand-Loom Weavers' Commissioners.

REPORT, by J. MITCHELL, Esq., LL.D., on the East of *England*.

REPORT, by A. AUSTIN, Esq., on the South-west of *England*.

REPORTS, by S. KEYSER, Esq., on the West Riding of *Yorkshire*, *Macclesfield*, &c.; and on *Germany*.

PART II.

(*In continuation of Part I., ordered, by The House of Commons, to be Printed*, 27 *March* 1839, *Sess. Paper, No.* 159.)

Ordered, by The House of Commons, *to be Printed*,
4 *February* 1840.

Hand-loom Inquiry Commission,
3, Trafalgar-square, Westminster,
May 12, 1839.

Sir,

IN obedience to Lord John Russell's desire, signified to this Board by your Letter of the 20th of February last, that they should give directions to have copies of any Reports of the Assistant Hand-loom Inquiry Commissioners prepared and transmitted to you, I am requested to forward to you the enclosed copies of the Reports of Dr. Mitchell, Mr. Austin, and Mr. Keyser, in addition to those sent on the 19th of March last.

They contain the results of the investigations in the East and the South-west of England, and of part of those in the North; together with the remainder of the Foreign Inquiry. The rest of the Assistant Commissioners' Reports are in a state of great forwardness, and will be transmitted to you as they are received.

I have the honour to be,
Sir,
Your most obedient Servant,

Joseph Fletcher,
Secretary.

To the Honourable Fox Maule, M.P.
&c. &c.

REPORT, from J. Mitchell, Esq. ll.d., on —

The East of England - - - - - - - - - - p. 213

REPORT, from A. Austin, Esq., on—

The South-west of England - - - - - - - - - p. 407

REPORTS, from S. Keyser, Esq., on—

Yorkshire (West Riding), Macclesfield, &c. - - - - - p. 475

Germany - - - - - - - - - - - - - p. 509

REPORT of *James Mitchell*, Esq. LL.D., on the Condition of the Weavers of SPITALFIELDS, NORWICH, &c.

To William Nassau Senior, Samuel Jones Loyd, William Edward Hickson, and John Leslie, Esquires, Her Majesty's Commissioners for inquiring into the Condition of the Hand-loom Weavers in the United Kingdom.

Gentlemen,

IMMEDIATELY on receiving your Instructions I proceeded to make the inquiries pointed out, commencing with the weaving population of the Metropolis.

SPITALFIELDS.

THE district of Spitalfields is the oldest seat in England of the silk manufacture, where it is still carried on, and, for a long period, had almost exclusively the whole silk trade of the kingdom, and still employs many thousand looms; it therefore deserves more particular attention; and I shall commence with giving a statement of its geographical boundaries, the introduction of the silk trade by the French refugees, and the state and condition of the weavers for upwards of a century after. This part of the subject, which may in some degree be considered as historical, will afford the means of comparison with the state of the weaving population of the present day, now carrying on the trade under competition with other districts, and under a change of the law by which the trade is regulated.

OF THE DISTRICT OF SPITALFIELDS.

THE term Spitalfields, at an early period of the history of London, designated the suburban fields situate between the ancient highways of Bishopsgate-street and the Whitechapel High-street.

During the period of the Roman occupancy of this country, these fields formed part of the pomœrium, or open space of ground surrounding the city walls, upon which all buildings were prohibited. In this place, it was usual to inter the bodies of deceased citizens of Roman London, which circumstance has been sufficiently attested within the two last centuries, by the great quantities of funeral relics which have been exhumed in making excavations in this neighbourhood. The particular designation of Spitalfields has, however, a more recent origin, as it was not until more than a century after the Conquest that the open tract of meadow land in this situation began to be known by that name.

In the year 1197, one Walter Brune, a citizen of London, being aided by others, founded, in these fields, a large hospital for poor brethren of the Order of St. Austin; and it was from the structure thus raised that the surrounding meadows obtained the name of Spital, or more properly speaking, Hospital fields. The present parishes of Christchurch Spitalfields, and Bethnal-green, the hamlet of Mile-end New Town, with portions of Whitechapel, of Hackney, and of St. Leonard's Shoreditch, constituted the district upon which this popular designation was conferred, without reference to any legally defined boundaries, as the land (much of a similar character) between Aldersgate and Bishopsgate was formerly called Moorfields; and as also the district between Whitechapel-road and the Tower was known by the name of Goodman's-fields.

In 1235, the hospital was refounded, and received the appellation of the New Hospital of Our Lady without Bishopsgate, great alterations being also made in the arrangement of its buildings. Under its new designation, this hospital flourished during the several reigns intervening between the years 1235 and 1532, when, at the general dissolution of religious foundations, this fell with the rest; neither its general utility nor its benevolent character operating the least in its favour.

This account was prepared by Mr. Charles Johnston, and, on comparing it with Dugdale and other authorities, it was found to be correct.

Of this district of Spitalfields, the weaving population for a long period was chiefly confined to Christchurch Spitalfields; and now it has emigrated into

Spitalfields.

Report of J. Mitchell, Esq. LL.D.

the parish of Bethnal-green. I shall therefore not enter into an account of the other parishes, because, although there is a portion of the weavers now residing in them, they form but an exceedingly small proportion of the population.

Of the Parish of Christchurch Spitalfields.

This parish is, for brevity's sake, frequently called the parish of Spitalfields, but not correctly, as the term Spitalfields has a much more extensive signification. The church is considered to be exceedingly handsome, more particularly in the interior. It is one of the 50 churches ordered by Parliament to be erected in 1710. The foundation was laid in 1723, and the church was completed and consecrated in 1729.

At this time, it appears, by the dates on the stones fixed in houses in the corner of the streets, that London had extended into the boundaries of the parish of Bethnal-green.

The parish of Christchurch must then have been fully occupied. During the present century, the number of the inhabitants has not greatly increased.

In 1801, it was	15,091
In 1811	16,200
In 1821	18,650

And in 1831, there was a diminution of 701, the number being only 17,949, which, in the 30 years from 1801 to 1831, gives an increase of only 2,858.

Of the Parish of Bethnal Green.

The parish of Bethnal-green was one of the hamlets of the ancient manor of Stebon Heath, or Stepney. In the year 1740, an Act of Parliament (13 Geo. 2) was obtained for making it a parish and erecting a parish church. In the petition for the Act, set forth in the preamble, it is stated, that the hamlet contained 1,800 houses, and a population of 15,000 people. There had previously been churchwardens and overseers of the poor, but no church. In maps of London made at that time, the houses in the boundary of Bethnal-green parish are all close adjoining Christchurch Spitalfields parish, and the same is the case ten years afterwards, except that there are a few around the church.

The population the next sixty years did not greatly increase, the enumeration of 1801 giving only 22,310. For the next thirty years the increase was rapid. In 1811 the population was 33,619; in 1821 it was 45,676, and in 1831 it was 62,018, being an increase in thirty years of 39,718.

The population has been increasing since, but probably at a much less rapid rate.

The houses in the streets immediately contiguous to Christchurch, Spitalfields, were probably erected in the reigns of Queen Anne and of King George I.; the dates inscribed on the stones at the corner are all of that period. The houses are larger and more lofty than in that part of the parish erected within the present century. In 1740, the number of people to a house was eight one-third, whereas in the lately built streets it is not above five to a house.

There is no parish in or about London where there is such a mass of low-rented houses with only an exceedingly small number of houses of a larger value.

The parish officers, Mr. Bestow, Mr. Christey, and Mr. Stokes, have given the following statement:—

Houses rated under 20 *l.*, about	11,193
Ditto above 20 *l.* and under 30 *l.*	570
Ditto 30 *l.* ditto 40 *l.*	187
Ditto 40 *l.* ditto 50 *l.*	18
Ditto 50 *l.* and upwards	15
	11,983
Factories, public-houses, and other places of business above 40 *l.* and under 50 *l.*	33
Ditto 50 *l.* and upwards	32
Total	12,048

Of the last-mentioned number there are nine rated at 100 *l.* and upwards.

Of the French Refugees in Spitalfields.

The French Protestants and Walloons came to England in consequence of the persecutions of the Duke of Alva. In the third year of Queen Elizabeth, a letter of license from the Crown was granted, allowing them to settle and exercise their trade, which was that of silk manufacturers. In 1568 the refugees had the crypt of the cathedral of Canterbury allowed to them for the exercise of their religion. In 1634 there were as many at Canterbury as 900 communicants. In 1665, there were found to be then at Canterbury 126 master weavers and 1,300 other persons, besides of the English to the number of 759. In 1676 they received a charter of incorporation, in which it is said that the number of persons employed was 2,500. (For farther particulars see Hasted's History of Kent.)

After the revocation of the Edict of Nantz in 1685, many more refugees came over; it is said to the number of 50,000.

It is not until this time that we are able to trace the trade to Spitalfields. Hitherto it was at Canterbury, but a few may have previously settled in London. Gradually the trade has left Canterbury altogether. In 1799 there were in that city only ten master weavers and eighty communicants of the French church; now the French church at Canterbury has become extinct, and of the silk trade there is not a remnant left.

This has been ascertained by evidence obtained by Mr. Joseph Fletcher, the Secretary of the Commission, from Mr. John Callaway, the postmaster in that city.

Of the settling of the French in Spitalfields, and of their subsequent history, Mr. John Williams, a gentleman distinguished for antiquarian researches, has, in his evidence, given the following account:—

"Upon the revocation of the Edict of Nantz in 1685, numerous French artizans left their native country, and took refuge in the neighbouring states. King James II. encouraged these settlers; and William III. published a proclamation, dated April 25, 1689, for the encouraging French Protestants to transport themselves into this kingdom, promising them his royal protection, and to render their living in this kingdom comfortable and easy to them. In January 1692 we find them presenting a petition to the House of Commons, praying for relief; but as little or no attention was paid to it, they applied to the king in person, who ordered the Parliament to take their case into consideration. This, however, was likewise ineffectual; and the king in his speech, on opening the Parliament on the 22d of November 1695, desires the Commons to give a part of their attention to the French refugees, and the consequence appears to have been a vote of 15,000 *l.* per annum for their relief. In 1707 they presented a petition to Queen Anne, praying her to interfere in favour of their persecuted brethren in France; and in the latter part of her reign, they were particularly recommended to her notice by the King of Prussia. During this period they are believed to have settled in Spitalfields, and this is confirmed by the appearance of the houses, few, if any, being older than about that time. They quickly became very flourishing; so much so, that it was stated in Parliament in 1713, on the occasion of the debate upon the treaty of commerce between England and France, that upwards of 300,000 persons were maintained in England by the silk trade alone.

"For a considerable time the population of Spitalfields might be considered as exclusively French; that language was universally spoken; and even within the memory of persons now living, their religious rites were performed in that tongue in chapels erected for that purpose. These were, as far as I can ascertain, in

"Church-street, now belonging to the Wesleyan Methodists;
"Brown's-lane, unoccupied and in ruins;
"Crispin-street, now the rooms of the Mathematical Society;
"John-street, now a warehouse belonging to the brewery;
"Parliament-court, now occupied by a dissenting congregation;
"Montague-street, afterwards a throwster's shop, now pulled down;
"Quaker-street, since a public-house;
"West John-street. In this chapel service was performed in French until within a few years of this time; it is now occupied by a sect of dissenters.

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"At present the population consists of very many of the descendants of these first settlers, as is indicated by their names, but these are almost the sole traces of their having originally been French."

The French hospital in St. Luke's parish has now as its inmates 14 men and 36 women. To obtain admission, it is necessary to present a petition to the committee, and to satisfy them that the petitioner is French, or of French descent. Strict proof it is now difficult to procure. The committee must satisfy themselves as they best can. In another generation, in all probability, proof of French descent will, in almost every case, be impossible.

Mr. Joseph Roquez, now 74 years of age, an inmate of the French hospital in St. Luke's, gives the following statement respecting the French churches in his time:—

"There was a church in St. John-street Bethnal-green, another in Brown's-lane Spitalfields, a third at the corner of Church-street Spitalfields, a fourth in Parliament-court Old Artillery Ground; I do not recollect of more in that district. The service was the same as in the French Protestant church of the present day. The church in Church-street ceased to be French in 1809, and that in St. John-street, Bethnal-green, some few years after, and that was the last."

Of the public-houses, he also states that, in his youth,

"There were several kept by Frenchmen, and chiefly frequented by French. The whole district might have been called Petty France. I have heard French songs sung in the street. There might be half-a-dozen French public-houses. The conversation in the street was often in French."

This is perhaps the best place to state, that some of the refugees, after the revocation of the Edict of Nantz, settled at Norwich, and introduced a knowledge of some fabrics into that city. They were sufficient in number to form a French church: the building is still in existence, and accommodates a congregation of Protestant Dissenters.

Such was the population which, for upwards of a century, carried on the silk manufacture in Spitalfields, having nearly the whole trade in their hands, and under the regulation of Acts of Parliament which regulated wages, and secured thereby a full remuneration to the operatives, and protected the manufacturers against the effects of competition amongst each other.

That the weavers of that day were a very different class of men, both intellectually and physically, from the weavers of the present day, I cannot give a more decided proof than by an account of the societies for amusement and instruction which flourished amongst them.

Of the Societies of the Weavers in former Days.

Of the societies formed by the weavers of former days, and the memory of which is still retained by a few very old men, and of the manner of spending their leisure, an excellent account is given in his evidence by Mr. Edward Church, who has resided amongst the weavers for 30 years, as a solicitor in Spital-square:—

"It may appear strange, but I believe the origin of many of our most flourishing societies may be traced to Spitalfields. The well-known Dollond, sen., was a weaver; Simpson and Edwards were weavers, and taken from the loom into the employ of Government at Woolwich and Chatham, to teach mathematics. The Spitalfields Mathematical Society is second in point of time to the Royal Society, and still exists. There was an Historical Society, which was merged in the Mathematical Society. There was a Floricultural Society, very numerously attended, but now extinct. The weavers were almost the only botanists of their day in the metropolis. They passed their leisure hours, and generally the whole family dined on Sundays at the little gardens in the environs of London, now mostly built upon, in small rooms, about the size of modern omnibuses, with a fire-place at the end. There was an Entomological Society, and they were the first entomologists in the kingdom. The society is gone. They had a Recitation Society for Shakspearian readings, as well as reading

reading other authors, which is now almost forgotten. They had a Musical Society, but this is also gone. There was a Columbarian Society, which gave a silver medal as a prize for the best pigeon of a fancy breed, chosen by the society on show; this society is extinct, but the fondness for pigeons still remains, and a few flights are kept, more for profit than amusement. Many anecdotes are told of the extreme attention paid by the weavers to their pigeons, and their fondness for them. They were great bird-fanciers, and breeders of canaries, many of whom now cheer their quiet hours while at the loom.

"Their breed of spaniels, called Splashers, are now much reduced in size, and from being bred small, were of the best sporting blood; these they delighted in exercising in the fields round London, but their numbers are much diminished.

"Many of the weavers were freemasons, but there are now very few left, and these old men. Many of the houses in Spitalfields had porticos, with seats at their doors, where the weavers might be seen on summer evenings enjoying their pipes. The porticos have given way to improvements of the pavements.

"Competition, the great cause of reduction of wages, arising from deductions in the price of the manufactured goods, in attempting to gain trade by underselling each other, has produced great changes. The trade of the weaver who, assisted by his family and others, made a few pieces only, has been absorbed by the great manufacturers. Many of the former masters have been reduced to journeymen; poverty has dispossessed them of their amusements; their societies, their comforts, are in a great measure gone, never, I fear, to return. The diffusion of the trade to other parts of the kingdom, the reduction of wages by out-door allowance, under the Poor Laws, distributed in such a manner as to throw the burthen on those who ought not to have borne it, and save the pockets of the extensive manufacturers, with occasional depressions of the trade, from a change of fashion from silk to other materials, with other causes, have depressed the workmen, the tradesmen, and all dependent on them. There have been some exceptions, but they are few, and consist of those manufacturers who, taking advantage of a start of trade, have speculated largely, become rich, and have left the trade and neighbourhood."

Mr. Church states that there was another weaver who contested with Mr. Dollond the honour of the discovery of his telescope, but he had no proofs by which to substantiate his claim.

Respecting Mr. Simpson, he gives the following statement:—

"Of Simpson an anecdote is told, that after the publication of his work on fluxions, and while living and working as a weaver in a garret in Angel-alley, Bishopsgate-street, he was waited upon by a gentleman, to engage him as a teacher of the mathematics to the cadets at Woolwich. The gentleman gave a lad a few halfpence to find out Simpson, and tell him that he wished to speak with him. Simpson came down from the loom in a greenbaize apron, very meanly dressed. The gentleman said, 'I want to see Mr. Simpson,' to which he replied, 'I am Mr. Simpson.' 'But I want to see *the* Mr. Simpson,' said the gentleman. 'I am *the* Mr. Simpson,' was the reply. 'But I want to see the Mr. Simpson who wrote the work on fluxions,' said the still incredulous gentleman. 'I am the Mr. Simpson who wrote the work on fluxions,' was the reply, 'and if you will come up stairs, I will show you the manuscript at the loom.' The gentleman did so, was satisfied, and engaged him; and on asking when he would commence, was answered, 'When I have finished the piece of goods in the loom.'"

To enliven the heaviness of this Report, I insert a further extract from the evidence of Mr. Church, which will show the spirit with which the pigeon fancying was carried on in these good old times:—

"One weaver had an exceedingly beautiful pigeon, which he fancied to be the finest in the world; but another weaver had also a wonderful pigeon, which, on an appeal to the judgment of the assembled amateurs, was declared to surpass it. In consequence of this, the disappointed weaver bought the victor with all the money he possessed, and immediately wrung its neck, saying, 'Now my pigeon is the best.'"

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"A gentleman who was desirous of improving his breed of pigeons, went to one of the most celebrated fanciers, and after looking at his birds, was asked ten guineas for one. The gentleman was surprised at the price, and, not knowing its reputed value, told the pigeon-fancier that he thought 10*s.* was quite enough for any pigeon in existence. This raised the pigeon-fancier's indignation, high words ensued, and he threatened to throw the gentleman down stairs. 'Do you think to insult me, because I seem poor? Look here, Sir,' said he, and seizing the unfortunate bird, he wrung its neck, and threw it to his wife, saying, 'Dress that pigeon for my dinner.'"

"I will only mention the issue of a curious bet:—Two weavers had each a pigeon remarkable for speed. They were matched, and the bird first produced in the parlour of a public-house in Brick-lane was to be the winner. A mutual friend took the birds to Highgate, and holding one in each hand, let them fly at the same moment. Each bird flew directly home, where their respective owners were waiting to catch and produce them. Each bird entered its trap at the same instant. They were caught, and brought towards the parlour. One of the men had gained so much on the other, that he was entering the passage while the other was opposite the parlour window in the street. The man in the street saw his danger, but with great presence of mind, guarding his hand with his hat, he darted it through the parlour window, and putting the other hand with the bird into the room, exclaimed, 'See, Gentlemen, my bird is in the room first;' and he was acknowledged to have won his wager."

The existence and strong support of such societies and amusements as have been described, proves that in former days the weavers were in comparatively easy circumstances, and were, for their rank in life, an intellectual body of men. We are not, however, to suppose that the whole of them spent their time and money in this way. Intellectual enjoyment is not suited to the taste of the bulk of mankind in any station. With a large portion of the weavers the animal enjoyments adapted to their condition were the chief objects of their desire.

Mr. John Duce says, "Monday was generally a day of rest; Tuesday was not severe labour; Saturday was a day to go the warehouse, and that was an easy day to the weaver. In those times we could afford to have balls, and to go and spend money at fairs; and we could afford to take our wives and families to a tea-garden; but it is as much as we can do now, working hard all the week, and sometimes on Sunday besides, to be able to get a bare living; and such as work so many hours destroy their health and strength."

There is still a remnant of the attachment to gardening, for which the weavers of former times were celebrated, as will be seen in the description of the principal spot where it is manifested.

Saunderson's Gardens.

These gardens are situate on the east of Bethnal-green, and not above a quarter of a mile from it. They may cover about six acres of ground. There is one general enclosure round the whole, and each separate garden is divided from the rest by small palings. The number of gardens was stated to be about 170; some are much larger than the rest. In almost every garden is a neat summer-house, where the weaver and his family may enjoy themselves on Sundays and holidays, when they usually dine and take tea. There are walks through the ground by which access is easy to the gardens. Much care is bestowed on the cultivation. When visited in June 1838, some of the gardens had cabbages, lettuces, and pease, but most of the cultivators had a far loftier ambition. Many had tulip-beds, in which the proprietors not a little gloried, and over which they had screens which protected from the sun and from the storm. There had been a contest for a silver medal amongst the tulip proprietors. There were many other flowers of a high order; and it was expected that in due time the show of dahlias for that season would not fail to bring glory to Spitalfields. In this neighbourhood are several dealers in dahlias.

Having given an account of the weavers in former times, I now proceed to report on their present condition; following the order in which the several objects of inquiry are noticed in the instructions issued by the Central Board. In the course of the investigation it was seen that much light would be thrown on

on all matters by a comprehensive census of the weaving population, and the consent of the Central Board having been obtained, it was accordingly carried into effect. As preliminary to all other matters, I now report the results. These have been worked out very minutely, the Spitalfields district being divided into seven subdivisions, and afterwards the whole being classed together. These subdivisions are the four districts into which the parish of Bethnal-green is divided by the authorities of that parish; also Christchurch, Mile-end Newtown, and Shoreditch.

I consider it important to publish the details of each several district for this reason, that at any future time it may be easy to ascertain the comparative condition of the trade by a census of any of these subdivisions, as the expense and labour both in obtaining the materials and making the calculation in the whole district, would be so great that it would seldom or ever be attempted; whereas the same might be done in one subdivision, which might be considered the best sample of the whole. This is the first census of the Spitalfields weavers that has ever been made, which is a proof how difficult, expensive, and laborious the matter has been considered.

Census of the Weavers.

The Central Board having approved of a proposal to obtain a census of the weavers, measures were taken to obtain it. A superintending committee was formed, and a plan of operations was adjusted. It was considered desirable to get as full and minute an account as possible, and at the same time avoid asking questions which would excite the jealousy of the weavers, or give offence.

Instructions were drawn out and given to the six men engaged, Messrs. Howard, Jones, Martin, Pack, Taylor, and Tilley, and a meeting was held almost every evening to receive a report of their progress.

Mr. William Kincaid was of the greatest service in the whole of the business.

In the books made out of the census are shown the district, the street, the number of the house of the street, the name of the weaver, and the number of looms employed, distinguishing whether worked by a man, a woman, a boy, a girl, and an apprentice boy, or an apprentice girl: also the fabric made, whether velvet, Jacquard velvet, Jacquard or figured goods, or plain goods. An account was also taken of the number of looms actually seen to be unemployed; and also a separate account was taken of the number of looms which persons said that they had parted with from distress. The six men employed are ready to verify the books on oath, if ever called upon so to do; and, altogether, they did their work in a manner highly creditable.

The results will appear in the following account:—

Census of the Weavers of the Parish of Bethnal Green.

Green District.

In the Green district of Bethnal-green parish the following looms were employed in the beginning of July 1838:—

Looms worked by men		929
—	women	648
—	boys	84
—	girls	57
—	apprentice boys	10
—	apprentice girls	1
		1,729
Looms unemployed		357
Total Looms		2,086

In addition, it was stated by several persons that they had parted with their looms to the number of 39.

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The 1,729 looms belonged to 799 families :—

			Looms.
Families having 1 loom - - - -	230	230	
— 2 looms - - -	311	622	
— 3 looms - - -	173	519	
— 4 looms - - -	70	280	
— 5 looms - - -	12	60	
— 6 looms - - -	3	18	
TOTAL - -	799	1,729	

The looms worked by men were occupied as follows :

Velvets - - - - - - - -	308
Jacquard or figured goods - - - - -	40
Plain goods - - - - - - - -	581
TOTAL - -	929

The looms worked by women were occupied as follows :

Velvets - - - - - - - -	90
Jacquard or figured goods - - - - -	8
Plain goods - - - - - - - -	550
TOTAL - -	648

The looms worked by boys were occupied as follows :

Velvets - - - - - - - -	19
Jacquard or figured goods - - - - -	1
Plain goods - - - - - - - -	64
TOTAL - -	84

The looms worked by girls were occupied as follows :

Velvets - - - - - - - -	12
Plain goods - - - - - - - -	45
TOTAL - -	57

The looms worked by apprentice boys were occupied as follows :

Velvets - - - - - - - - -	4
Plain goods - - - - - - - -	6
TOTAL - -	10

The loom worked by the apprentice girl was occupied in plain goods.

The looms were therefore engaged in the following fabrics :

Velvets - - - - - - - -	433
Jacquard or figured goods - - - - -	49
Plain goods - - - - - - - -	1,247
TOTAL - -	1,729

The whole of the preceding information may be arranged in a Tabular form:

	Men.	Women.	Boys.	Girls.	Apprentice		Totals.
					Boys.	Girls.	
Velvets	308	90	19	12	4	- -	433
Jacquard or figured goods	40	8	1	- -	- -	- -	49
Plain goods	581	550	64	45	6	1	1,247
	929	648	84	57	10	1	1,729

Church District.

In this district there is a larger number of looms.

Looms worked by men	1,535
— women	1,095
— boys	147
— girls	114
— apprentice boys	34
— apprentice girls	7
	2,932
Looms unemployed	314
Total	3,246

The 2,932 looms belonged to 1,191 families:

Families having 1 loom	224	224
— 2 looms	411	822
— 3 looms	299	897
— 4 looms	161	644
— 5 looms	53	265
— 6 looms	11	66
— 7 looms	2	14
Total	1,161	2,932

After the detailed statement relative to the Green district already given, the following Table will be intelligible:—

	Men.	Women.	Boys.	Girls.	Apprentice		Totals.
					Boys.	Girls.	
Velvets	638	210	24	25	2	- -	899
Jacquard velvets	12	1	8	- -	- -	- -	21
Jacquard or figured goods	174	42	13	6	1	- -	236
Plain goods	711	842	102	83	31	7	1,776
	1,535	1,095	147	114	34	7	2,932

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Town District.

In this district are the following looms :—

Looms worked by men		1,486
—	women	985
—	boys	136
—	girls	84
—	apprentice boys	8
—	apprentice girls	4
		2,703
Unemployed		444
	Total	3,147

In addition, it was stated by several persons that they had parted with their looms, to the number of 98.

The 2,703 looms belonged to 1,327 families :—

Families having 1 loom	522	522
— 2 looms	458	916
— 3 looms	194	582
— 4 looms	101	404
— 5 looms	40	200
— 6 looms	8	48
— 7 looms	2	14
— 8 looms	1	8
— 9 looms	1	9
Total	1,327	2,703

After the detailed statement relative to the Green District, the following Table, will be sufficient to give the necessary information :—

	Men.	Women.	Boys.	Girls.	Apprentice		Totals.
					Boys.	Girls.	
Velvets	576	152	28	7	1	-	764
Jacquard velvets	2	-	-	-	-	-	2
Jacquard or figured goods	112	23	5	1	-	-	141
Plain goods	796	810	103	76	7	4	1,796
	1,486	985	136	84	8	4	2,703

Hackney Road District.

In this district are the following looms :—

Looms worked by men		282
—	women	169
—	boys	20
—	girls	9
—	apprentice boys	3
—	apprentice girls	0
		483
Looms unemployed		105
	Total	588

In addition, it was stated by several persons that they had parted with their looms, to the amount of 52.

The

The looms belonged to 225 families, as follows:—

Families having	1 loom	87	87
—	2 looms	71	142
—	3 looms	36	108
—	4 looms	19	76
—	5 looms	8	40
—	6 looms	2	12
—	7 looms	1	7
—	11 looms	1	11
	TOTAL	225	483

After the detailed statement relative to the Green District, the following Table will be sufficient to give the necessary information:—

	Men.	Women.	Boys.	Girls.	Apprentice Boys.	Apprentice Girls.	TOTALS.
Velvets	33	13	2	-	-	-	48
Jacquard	17	1	1	-	-	-	19
Plain	232	155	17	9	3	-	416
	282	169	20	9	3	-	483

Taking into one the whole four districts of Bethnal-green, which is the weavers' parish, being that in which the vast majority resides, we have of the weavers employed in the beginning of July 1838:—

Men	4,232	
Women	2,897	
Boys	387	
Girls	264	
Apprentice boys	55	
Apprentice girls	12	
	7,847	
Unemployed	776	
	8,623	
With an additional number who said that they were weavers, but had been obliged to part with their looms	189	
TOTAL	8,812	

The 7,847 looms belong to 3,512 families, as follows:—

Families having	1 loom	1,063	1,063
—	2 looms	1,251	2,502
—	3 looms	702	2,106
—	4 looms	351	1,404
—	5 looms	113	565
—	6 looms	24	144
—	7 looms	5	35
—	8 looms	1	8
—	9 looms	1	9
—	11 looms	1	11
	TOTAL	3,512	7,847

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The whole four districts thrown into a Tabular form, as they have been separately, will show as follows :—

	Men.	Women.	Boys.	Girls.	Apprentice		Totals.
					Boys.	Girls.	
Velvets - - - -	1,555	465	73	44	7	- -	2,144
Jacquard velvets - -	14	1	8	- -	- -	- -	23
Jacquard or figured goods -	343	74	20	7	1	- -	445
Plain goods - - -	2,320	2,357	286	213	47	12	5,235
	4,232	2,897	387	264	55	12	7,847

In addition, looms unemployed found on inspection to be 776, and the looms said to be parted with, 189; altogether, 8,812.

Such was Bethnal-green in the beginning of July 1838.

Census of the Weavers in Christ Church, Middlesex, commonly called Christ Church, Spitalfields.

This parish has been found to contain a much smaller number of looms than has ever been supposed.

The looms employed were only 669, as follows :—

Looms worked by men - - - - - -	415
— women - - - - -	227
— boys - - - - -	15
— girls - - - - -	11
— apprentice boys - - -	1
— apprentice girls - - -	0
	669
Looms unemployed - - - - - -	147
Total - - -	816

In addition, it was stated by several persons, that they had parted with their looms, to the number of 10.

The 669 looms belonged to 382 families, as follows :—

Families having 1 loom - - - -	184	184
— 2 looms - - - -	139	278
— 3 looms - - - -	42	126
— 4 looms - - - -	13	52
— 5 looms - - - -	3	15
— 6 looms - - - -	1	6
— 8 looms - - - -	1	8
Total - - -	383	669

The

The whole particulars of this district, thrown into a Tabular form, will appear as follows:—

	Men.	Women.	Boys.	Girls.	Apprentice		Totals.
					Boys.	Girls.	
Velvets	137	30	-	1	1	-	169
Jacquard velvets	1	-	-	-	-	-	1
Jacquard or figured goods	22	2	-	-	-	-	24
Plain goods	255	195	15	10	-	-	475
	415	227	15	11	1	-	669

Census of the Weavers in Mile End New Town

This hamlet of Stepney, or Stebon-heath manor, bounds on Bethnal-green. The population was in—

1801	5,253
1811	6,028
1821	7,091
1831	7,284

The looms employed in this hamlet were 704:

Looms worked by men	396
— women	254
— boys	34
— girls	19
— apprentice boys	1
— apprentice girls	0
	704
Looms unemployed	65
	769

In addition, it was stated by several persons that they had parted with their looms, to the number of 28.

The 704 looms belonged to 361 families, as follows:—

Families having 1 loom	149	149
— 2 looms	135	270
— 3 looms	42	126
— 4 looms	22	88
— 5 looms	8	40
— 6 looms	4	24
— 7 looms	1	7
Total	361	704

The whole particulars of this district, thrown into a Tabular form, will appear as follows:—

	Men.	Women.	Boys.	Girls.	Apprentice		Totals.
					Boys.	Girls.	
Velvets	166	29	2	-	-	-	197
Jacquard or figured goods	17	2	-	-	-	-	19
Plain goods	213	223	32	19	1	-	488
	396	254	34	19	1	-	704

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Census of the Weavers of Shoreditch Parish.

An attempt was made to enumerate the weavers distributed over Shoreditch parish, but in most of the streets no weavers were found at all, and when any were discovered it was seldom more than one house in a street.

The whole number of weavers discovered were,

Men	55
Women	17
Boys	4
Girls	1
Apprentices	5
	82
Looms unemployed	6
Total	88

In addition to which, it was stated by several persons that they had parted with their looms, to the number of 15.

The 82 looms belonged to 43 families, as follows :—

Families having 1 loom	22	22
— 2 looms	13	26
— 3 looms	3	9
— 4 looms	3	12
— 6 looms	1	6
— 7 looms	1	7
Total	43	82

The whole particulars of this district, thrown into a Tabular form, will appear as follows :—

	Men.	Women.	Boys.	Girls.	Apprentice Boys.	Apprentice Girls.	Totals.
Velvets	13	2	1	-	1	-	17
Jacquard goods	10	-	-	-	1	-	11
Plain goods	32	15	3	1	3	-	54
	55	17	4	1	5	-	82

Summary of the Census for the whole of the Spitalfields District.

Taking the whole of the Spitalfields district together, the state of the weaving population is ascertained to be as follows :—

Looms worked by men	5,098
— women	3,395
— boys	440
— girls	296
— apprentice boys	61
— apprentice girls	12
	9,302
Looms unemployed	894
Total	10,196

In

In addition to which several persons stated that they had parted with their looms to the number of 242, and if such was the case, the total number of looms ascertained is 10,438.

The 9,302 looms belonged to 4,299 families, as follows:—

Families having 1 loom	- - -	1,418	1,418
— 2 looms	- - -	1,538	3,076
— 3 looms	- - -	789	2,367
— 4 looms	- - -	389	1,556
— 5 looms	- - -	124	620
— 6 looms	- - -	30	180
— 7 looms	- - -	7	49
— 8 looms	- - -	2	16
— 9 looms	- - -	1	9
— 11 looms	- - -	1	11
	TOTAL - - -	4,299	9,302

The particulars of the 9,302 looms employed, thrown into a Tabular form, will appear as follows:—

	Men.	Women.	Boys.	Girls.	Apprentice Boys.	Apprentice Girls.	TOTALS.
Velvets - - - -	1,871	526	76	46	8	- -	2,527
Jacquard velvets - -	15	1	8	- -	- -	- -	24
Jacquard or figured goods -	392	78	20	7	2	- -	499
Plain goods - - -	2,820	2,790	336	243	51	12	6,252
	5,098	3,395	440	296	61	12	9,302

There is no doubt a small additional remnant beyond what has been ascertained. Some individual weavers work towards Stepney and Poplar, and a small number work at Greenwich, chiefly pensioners, estimated at from 40 to 50. The results of investigation in Shoreditch parish showed the impracticability of getting any more than a close approximation, such as has been detailed; and we must therefore close this part of the Report, by stating the looms of the Spitalfields district, or of London, are from 10,500 to 11,000.

Of the families having one loom, there are

Looms worked by men - - - - - -	976
— women - - - - - -	442
TOTAL - - -	1,418

Of the families having two looms, there are

Looms worked by a man and woman - - -	1,231
— man and another man - -	152
— man and a boy - - -	64
— man and a girl - - -	15
— man and an apprentice boy -	8
— man and an apprentice girl -	2
— woman and another woman -	50
— woman and a boy - - -	5
— woman and a girl - - -	11
TOTAL - - -	1,538

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Of the families having three looms, there were worked by

Two men and a woman	252
A man and two women	168
A man, a woman, and a boy	88
A man, a woman, and a girl	73
Three men	56
Three women	27

The remainder of the families were made up of almost every imaginable permutation.

The same is still more the case with families having four looms.

With regard to the families with four looms, it is very frequently the case that one or more of the looms are worked by persons who pay a weekly rent for loom-standing.

This is invariably the case where there are five or more looms at work in one place.

Of the 894 looms unemployed, 202 belong to 143 families not having any employment, as follows:—

Families having 1 loom	97	97
— 2 looms	38	76
— 3 looms	3	9
— 4 looms	5	20
TOTAL	143	202

The rest of the unemployed looms belong to families included in the proprietors of the 9,302 looms now employed.

It was not considered expedient to direct inquiry as to the persons who had worked the looms found empty, as there were no means of ascertaining whether any statements given might be correct. In the Green district and the Hackney-road district, however, this information was sought, and the result is as follows:

In the Green district:—Men, 121; Women, 205; Boys, 16; Girls, 14; Apprentice boy, 1. Together, 357.

In the Hackney-road district:—Men, 24; Women, 72; Boys, 1; Girls, 7; Apprentice boy, 1. The persons employed of course have no means of testing the accuracy of this information; but there is nothing on the face of it to excite any doubt.

The real facts of this census will in some degree surprise those who have been accustomed to hear the weavers of Spitalfields spoken of as a body of 50,000: persons in situations which might be supposed to afford them the means of forming something like a sound opinion, have, during this inquiry, spoken of the weavers as a body of from 20,000 to 30,000. No doubt equal exaggeration has prevailed in other parts of the kingdom; and always will do where supposition is allowed to occupy the place of ascertained fact.

The instructions of the Central Board call the attention of the Assistant Commissioners to the pecuniary condition of the weavers. I therefore now proceed to report the information obtained respecting the wages earned by the weavers; the expenses which are to be deducted to arrive at their net earnings; the facilities of introduction to the art of weaving, on purpose to show the outlay of money and the time required to learn the trade; also the hours which a weaver must devote in order to earn the usual wages.

OF THE WEAVERS' WAGES.

THERE is no part of the inquiry which has been more difficult than that respecting wages, there being on every side a motive to give an untrue impression. It is also the case, that the most respectable manufacturers unconsciously mislead, and are apt to overstate the wages to the extent of about 50 per cent. When inquiry is made of them, a few of their best hands earning the highest wages, and in most constant employment, occur to their minds, and produce an impression which they communicate. They forget the multitude working at a less rate, and often for weeks and months out of employment; and they forget in

in like manner, the expenses inevitably connected with their work. The only way of getting at the truth is by a reference to the manufacturers' own books, and taking a sufficient number in succession as they stand in the book, and for a sufficient length of time, to form a fair average. The uniform result, both in London and in the country towns, has been, that a much lower average has been found to be the truth than previous impressions led to expect.

In respect of the wages of Spitalfields, Mr. Thomas Field Gibson has kindly communicated the following statement, taken from his books. The evidence of Mr. William Kincaid will show that it has been made out with the most rigorous strictness, with a view to get the exact truth.

A Statement, showing the Amount of Earnings on various Works of the Weavers in the Employ of *Thomas Field Gibson*, in Spitalfields, during the Year 1837. The Accounts are taken from his Weavers' Ledger, without any selection.

No. 1.—Waistcoat Velvets, being 4 single grounds and two double poles, 22 inches in width.

			£.	s.	d.
Folio 1.	Man from	December 26 to December 15	58	15	6
77.	—	December 28 to December 22	56	–	4
117.	—	March 7 to March 9	41	18	6
150.	—	December 28 to January 22	44	18	11
166.	—	January 30 to January 27	66	18	11
170.	—	January 30 to January 30	38	5	9
		£.	306	17	11

The average earnings of the above six weavers is 20*s.* per week. The highest amount of individual earnings is 25*s.* 9*d.* per week.

No. 2.—Garment Velvets, being 1,300 in the count on 20 inches in width.

			£.	s.	d.
Folio 10.	Man from	December 24 to December 23	38	14	7
14.	—	December 26 to December 26	39	5	5
17.	—	December 26 to December 22	64	3	2
35.	—	December 26 to December 20	53	12	7
102.	—	January 7 to January 2	39	17	10
114.	—	January 7 to January 5	62	2	7
		£.	297	16	2

The average earnings of the above six weavers is 19*s.* per week. The highest amount of individual earnings is 24*s.* 8*d.*

No. 3.—Garment Velvets, being 1,200 in the count, and 20 inches in width.

			£.	s.	d.
Folio 5.	Man from	December 26 to December 23	44	–	2
35.	—	December 27 to December 27	44	19	–
71.	—	February 1 to February 2	28	16	7
118.	—	January 12 to January 13	41	15	3
158.	Woman from	January 27 to January 25	41	2	–
169.	Man from	January 30 to February 2	38	–	6
		£.	238	13	6

The average earnings of the above six weavers is 15*s.* 3*d.* per week, and the highest amount of individual earnings, 17*s.* 3*d.*

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No. 4.—Garment Velvets, being 1,100 in the count, and 20 inches in width.

				£.	s.	d.
Folio 8.	Woman	from March 2 to March 1	- - - -	36	19	1
11.	Woman	– December 26 to December 27	- -	32	3	4
15.	Man	– December 24 to December 23	- -	39	16	7
19.	Woman	– December 26 to December 22	- -	42	14	–
103.	Man	– January 7 to January 7	- - -	45	–	–
146.	Woman	– January 21 to January 26	- - -	40	16	4
			£.	237	9	4

The average earnings of the above six weavers is 15*s.* 2*d.* per week, and the highest amount of individual earnings, 17*s.* 3*d.*

No. 5.—Garment Velvets, being 1,000 in the count, and 20 inches in width.

				£.	s.	d.
Folio 4.	Man	from December 24 to December 27	- -	27	–	–
20.	Woman	– December 26 to December 22	- -	34	14	7
21.	Woman	– December 26 to December 23	- -	46	7	–
40.	Woman	– December 27 to December 30	- -	25	10	–
49.	Man	– December 28 to December 30	- -	29	14	11
57.	Man	– March 18 to March 10	- - -	38	8	9
			£.	201	15	3

The average earnings of the above six weavers is 13*s.* per week, and the highest amount of individual earnings is 17*s.* 9*d.*

No. 6.—Plain Garment Silk, being four threads in the reed, 20 inches in width.

				£.	s.	d.
Folio 2.	Woman	from December 24 to December 20	- -	19	13	6
3.	Woman	– December 24 to December 26	- -	33	10	3
25.	Man	– December 26 to December 21	- -	28	2	6
27.	Man	– December 26 to December 26	- -	23	8	3
29.	Woman	– December 26 to December 29	- -	22	19	3
31.	Woman	– December 26 to December 28	- -	17	1	–
39.	Man	– December 27 to December 29	- -	18	5	5
60.	Woman	– December 29 to December 29	- -	21	17	3
68.	Woman	– December 30 to December 28	- -	16	6	–
81.	Man	– January 1 to January 3	- - -	22	4	6
84.	Woman	– February 16 to February 14	- - -	14	–	3
96.	Man	– January 4 to January 5	- - -	28	2	9
113.	Man	– January 10 to January 11	- - -	33	5	4
119.	Woman	– January 13 to January 13	- - -	33	18	11
127.	Man	– January 17 to January 15	- - -	36	15	3
130.	Man	– January 18 to January 20	- - -	27	2	4
145.	Man	– January 21 to January 15	- - -	30	13	8
149.	Man	– January 24 to January 27	- - -	29	16	2
152.	Man	– January 26 to January 27	- - -	31	14	4
153.	Man	– January 27 to January 23	- - -	25	18	9
			£.	514	15	8

The average earnings of the above 20 weavers is 9*s.* 11*d.* per week, and the highest amount of individual earnings is 14*s.* 1*d.* per week.

No. 7.—Light Satins, being five threads in the reed, and 18 inches in width.

			£.	s.	d.
Folio 12.	Woman from	February 15 to February 15	20	13	3
13.	—	December 24 to December 19	29	15	2
28.	—	December 26 to December 22	23	10	10
32.	—	December 27 to December 27	24	4	4
37.	—	December 27 to December 28	21	3	–
48.	—	December 28 to December 23	20	–	2
99.	—	January 7 to January 9	21	15	7
109.	—	January 9 to January 13	21	3	2
116.	—	February 13 to February 13	19	–	–
160.	—	January 30 to January 26	18	1	3
		£.	219	6	9

The average earnings of the above 10 weavers is 8*s.* 5*d.* per week, and the highest amount of individual earnings is 11*s.* 5*d.* per week.

General View.	Average Weekly Earnings.	Highest Individual Weekly Earnings.
No. 1. Waistcoat velvets	20/	25/9
2. Garment velvets	19/	24/8
3. Ditto - ditto	15/3	17/3
4. Ditto - ditto	15/2	17/3
5. Ditto - ditto	13/	17/9
6. Plain garment silk	911	14/1
7. Light satins	8/5	11/5

Mr. William Willson, of the firm of Willson, Casey & Phillips, which employs a very large number of looms, chiefly in the manufacture of plain silk, was kind enough to give the following account of the earnings of the weavers in their employment :—

	s.	d.
Average of ten looms, of two-thread plain sarsenet, for twelve months, at 4*d.* per yard	6	7
Average of one loom, the highest	10	8
Average of one loom, the lowest	4	5
Average of ten looms, of three-thread plain lut., for twelve months, at 5*d.* per yard	9	3
Average of one loom, the highest	14	6
Average of one loom, the lowest	7	–
Average of ten looms, of four-thread plain lut., for twelve months, at 6*d.* per yard	10	7
Average of one loom, the highest	12	9
Average of one loom, the lowest	9	8
Average of ten looms of slight velvets, for twelve months, at 2*s.* 9*d.* per yard	13	1
Average of one loom, the highest	16	1
Average of one loom, the lowest	9	9

Mr. William Kincaid, who made out the account of the wages of the weavers in Mr. Gibson's employment, has stated in his evidence that their expenses were not deducted, which would be necessary to get at their net earnings. Mr. Willson, who personally delivered his account, made the same statement. Deducting, therefore, as expenses, 3*s.* from the earnings of the velvet weavers, and 2*s.* 6*d.* from the plain weavers, we have the net earnings per week.

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		s.	d.
No. 1.	Waistcoat velvets	17	–
2.	Garment ditto	16	–
3.	Ditto - ditto	12	3
4.	Ditto - ditto	12	2
5.	Ditto - ditto	10	–
6.	Plain garment silk	7	5
7.	Light satins	5	11

And of Mr. Willson's weavers:

Plain sarsenet	4	1
Plain lutes.	6	9
Plain lutes.	8	1
Slight velvets	10	1

In respect of the weavers' expenses, we must always keep in mind that that portion which is allowed for winding quills is in many, if not most cases, gained by the children of the family; so that it is no real deduction from the family income.

Mr. Cole and a committee of weavers handed in a list of 20 plain weavers, employing between them and members of their families 37 looms, and whose united wages amounted to 14 *l.* 14 *s.* 11 *d.*; this would give nearly 11 *s.* 6 *d.* a loom, and deducting 3 *s.* expenses, would leave 8 *s.* 6 *d.* the net earnings, per loom, per week.

The same parties also gave an account of the earnings of 11 Jacquard weavers, and the average is 14 *s.* 8 *d.* a week, and deducting 3 *s.* expenses, will be 11 *s.* 8 *d.*

Mr. Joseph Hoyles, a weaver, gives the following statement of the weekly earnings:

Best velvets	20 *s.* to 21 *s.*
Ladies' velvet	17 *s.*
Second velvet	15 *s.*
Best plain	12 *s.* or 13 *s.*

If 3 *s.* be deducted from the higher prices, and 2 *s.* 6 *d.* from the lower, for the necessary expenses, the net earnings will be,—

Best velvets	17 *s.*
Ladies' ditto	14 *s.*
Second ditto	12 *s.*
Best plain	9 *s.* 6 *d.* to 10 *s.* 6 *d.*

He estimates the average earnings of a young unmarried woman at 8 *s.* a week, and of a married woman at 4 *s.*

Mr. Thomas Heath, of No. 8, Pedley-street, has been represented by many persons as one of the most skilful workmen in Spitalfields. He handed in about forty samples of figured silk done by him, and they appear exceedingly beautiful.

This weaver also gave a minute and detailed account of all his earnings for 430 weeks, being upwards of eight years, with the names of the manufacturers and the fabrics at which he worked. The sum of the gross earnings for 430 weeks is 322 *l.* 3 *s.* 4 *d.*, being about 14 *s.* 11 ¾ *d.*, say 15 *s.* a week. He estimates his expenses at 4 *s.*, which would leave 11 *s.* net wages; but take the expenses at 3 *s.* 6 *d.*, it is still only 11 *s.* 6 *d.*

He states his wife's earnings at about 3 *s.* a week.

He gives the following remarkable evidence:—

"*Q.* Have you any children?—*A.* No; I had two, but they are both dead, thanks be to God!

"Do you express satisfaction at the death of your children?—I do; I thank God for it. I am relieved from the burden of maintaining them, and they, poor dear creatures, are relieved from the troubles of this mortal life.

"There are many persons who represent the earnings of weavers at your branch as much higher than what you state?—Many persons deceive themselves by omitting to take into account the time which they lose by 'play,' that is, the

the time which we are unemployed. I took home a piece to-day, which I had wove in six days, and I got 30 *s.* for it. Some people would say that my earnings were 30 *s.* a week; but it is no such thing. I paid 4 *s.* expenses, which reduces the amount to 26 *s.*, and then it will probably be a week of play before I am set to work again. The manufacturer will wait until he get an order for what I am doing; he will do no work on the chance of sale; so it will be only 13 *s.* a week. I have been as fortunate as most of the trade. I have never been discharged altogether; I have always been attached to some warehouse, but then I have had a great deal of play, as others have had. I have not been able to buy a coat for these five years.

"What rent do you pay?—A more proper question would be, what rent ought I to pay. Paying rents is becoming an unusual thing with the weavers. I ought to pay 5 *s.* 6 *d.* a week; and that is one hardship in our trade, that we must pay so much rent. A bricklayer or a carpenter can get a place to live in for 1 *s.* 6 *d.* a week; but we must have a large house, well lighted at the top, to enable us to do our business. I was obliged to get an opening made in the ceiling, which was only eight feet high, which is the usual height of the rooms, in order to place my Jacquard machine, which requires a height of ten feet. My place is quite out of repair, and I can get nothing done.

"What does your landlord say?—He says, that as he can get no rent he cannot afford to do any repairs. I have heard that a great many landlords in Bethnal-green have considered that after paying all the outlay, their property was not worth holding, and have abandoned it accordingly."

The figured weavers have to give up much time in preparing their looms for a new pattern before they can begin to earn any money. If the pattern should take with the public, and the same work continue for some time, the figured weavers' earnings would be greater than in most branches; but from the frequent changes of fashion, and the consequent loss of time, the average amount of earnings is much reduced. Mr. William Hale, in 1823, in his evidence on the Spitalfields Act, says, p. 30, "I never yet met with a figured weaver but what would be glad to have constant employment in the plain work." The case is the same still.

Mr. William Garland has worked at the Jacquard loom, making figured goods for three years. He states his earnings to be 17*s.*, 18*s.*, and 19*s.* a week; from which expenses, say 3*s.* 6*d.*, have to be deducted, which will reduce the wages to 13*s.* 6*d.*, 14*s.* 6*d.*, and 15*s.* 6*d.* a week.

Mr. John Clarke comes forward to confirm what Mr. Garland and Mr. Heath have said about the reduction of wages, and to contradict certain testimony given to the Poor Law Commissioners. He asserts that his wages for the last three years have not exceeded 12*s.* a week, after deducting the necessary expenses connected with the loom; at the same time he has been generally employed, having had to wait sometimes a week or so for work, and then had full employment for five or six weeks without interruption, which he considers very regular employment, as compared with others.

In respect of the wages paid by Mr. Gibson, all the weavers to whom the statement has been shown, have said, first, that Mr. Gibson made goods of the best description, and with that view gave the weavers a price above many of the Spitalfields manufacturers. Secondly, that Mr. Gibson so arranged his business, that the weavers had but very little play, either waiting for a cane or for shute, consequently, the weavers whom he employed would earn more in 12 months than the weavers of many other manufacturers who might pay the same rate for what they had done.

Both these remarks are true.

To form a correct idea of the condition of the weavers generally, it is important to consider the proportion working at the different fabrics.

By the census which was taken in July 1838, of the looms employed, there were working

At velvets - - - - - - - -	2,527
At Jacquard velvets - - - - - -	24
At figured goods by the Jacquard loom - - -	499
At plain goods - - - - - - - -	6,252
TOTAL - - -	9,302

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More than two-thirds, therefore, were at work on the fabrics which in genera are paid the lowest price. By giving a list of other fabrics, and the prices paid for them, and adding the plain goods afterwards, as if these were merely a small appendix, a very erroneous impression may be produced.

The business of the weaver differs from that of some other tradesmen in this, that not only the head of the family, but other branches also may be employed, and thereby the family income be increased.

It is important to see how far this is actually the case. Now, in the 4,299 families employed, there are 1,418 having only one loom each, being 976 men and 442 women. If these be deducted from 4,299, the whole number employed in July 1838, we have remaining 2,881 having more looms than one at work. Of these there are 1,538 having two looms, leaving 1,343 having more than two.

From these facts, it follows that there are more families where there is only one loom, than there are families having more than two looms.

Where there are five, six, or more working together, it is not one family in a strict sense, as the number is made up by persons coming to work paying for loom-standing; and beyond a small profit which he may derive by the rent, the master of the house obtains no benefit.

Of the Expenses in Weaving.

There are certain expenses connected with weaving, which must be paid by the weaver, and he is entitled to deduct such payments from the money which he receives from the manufacturer, when he gives a statement of his net earnings. These are, the expense of winding his quills, light, loom-standing, loom-hire, repairs, turning on, and twisting in.

Of these expenses it may be right, for the true understanding of the weaver's condition, to give a description.

Winding the Quills.—The threads forming the weft or shute, which is carried by the shuttle backwards and forwards through the threads of the warp, are wound by a small wheel turned by the hand upon small reeds, technically called quills. Not improbably real quills were once used, and hence the name. The reeds or quills are placed one by one when wanted, inside the shuttle.

A child of six years of age may be put to wind quills, and might in three hours' hard work do enough to last a weaver a day; but the time occupied is usually much more. A child of 10 or 12 might do enough in a day to supply three looms.

This work is usually done by a weaver's own child, but some have to hire children to do it. There is in Bethnal-green a fair every Monday morning and every Tuesday morning, to which children come to be hired for the week. The usual wages obtained are 1 *s.* 2 *d.*, 2 *s.* 2 *d.*, 3 *s.* 2 *d.* The money is received by the parents, except the odd 2 *d.*, which is a perquisite to the child.

If the weaver hire a child, it is clearly a fair deduction; and if his own child do the work, it is clearly so much earned by the labour of the child, and not of the weaver. Besides this, if the child had not been engaged quilling at home, he might have gone out and earned so much at another house. This deduction in reckoning the weaver's wages is fair, although it do not abstract from the income of the family.

Light.—Weaving requires much light, hence the weaving shops are usually in the upper part of the house, and the sides of the houses are windows throughout. The weaver needs a good light at night. The expense of light is little in summer, but considerable in winter; take the year all round, it may be estimated at 5 *d.* per week.

Loom Standing.—When a single man comes to work in the shop of a weaver, he usually pays 1 *s.* a week for loom-standing. It is a deduction from his wages. Every weaver thinks he has a right, in calculating his wages, to make a deduction for loom-standing, on the ground that although he may work in his own house, his rent per week is more than if he merely hired a place for the lodging of himself and family. Many weavers, however, lodge wretchedly in the same rooms where they work.

Loom

Loom Hire.—The value of a new loom is from 30 *s.* to 40 *s.*; it will last a man perhaps for life. An old loom may be had perhaps for 15 *s.* Every weaver at all respectable has his own loom. Some are so improvident as not to possess a loom, and hire one at 1 *s.* 4 *d.* a month. The loom proprietors have great trouble in getting the loom-hire. This expense is so completely a tax which a man brings upon himself by his own total improvidence, that in calculating his wages no deduction can well be made for it.

The repairs of the loom and the expense of the shuttle are so exceedingly small as scarcely to be taken into account. At the same time, it has been given in evidence that even a penny is a great matter to a weaver.

Turning On.—The warp of a web comes from the warehouse twisted round a cane, and hence usually the whole is called a cane. This warp has to be turned on, or wound round the beam of the loom. The operation is called beaming on in Norfolk. This work is to be done whenever a new cane is got, once in a month or six weeks. Many weavers cannot do this operation themselves, and the expense is a deduction from their wages; but they ought to be able to do this work, and are only incomplete workmen if they cannot do it.

Twisting In.—When a weaver brings his web to a conclusion, he is obliged to leave, say a yard or more of the warp, which he cannot work up. If he get a fresh cane of the same fabric to do, it is less labour to him than if he had to set up the pattern for the first time. He takes the threads of the new cane, and twists them to the threads of the old cane. This work the weaver should be able to do himself; but some are unable, and have to pay for it.

Wr. William Hale, in a pamphlet, published in 1822, called "An Appeal to the Public in defence of the Spitalfields Act," p. 14, estimates the expenses of the weavers employed by him at 2 *s.* 6 *d.*, the lowest, to 3 *s.* 6 *d.*, the highest per week.

Mr. John Duce gives the following statement:

	£.	s.	d.
Extra rent for loom-standing	–	1	–
Winding quills	–	1	3
Light	–	–	6
Turning on and twisting in	–	–	6
	–	3	3

Where he has two looms:

Extra rent for loom-standing	–	2	–
Winding quills	–	2	3
Light	–	1	–
Turning on and twisting in	–	1	–
	–	6	3

Being 3 *s.* 1 ½ *d.* per loom.

Where he has three looms:

Extra rent for loom-standing	–	2	
Winding quills	–	3	3
Light	–	1	6
Turning on and twisting in	–	1	6
	–	8	3

Being 2 *s.* 9 *d.* per loom.

Mr. Samuel Sully gives his estimate as follows:

Winding quills	–	1	–
Room for the loom	–	1	–
Lights, average	–	–	6
Less in summer and more in winter.			
Turning on	–	–	2
Twisting in	–	–	6
Tear and wear of the loom	–	–	6
	–	3	8

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Mr. Hoyles's account of the expenses is as follows:

	£.	s.	d.
Winding quills	–	1	–
Extra rent	–	1	–
Lights, 6 *d.* in winter, 2 *d.* in summer; take the average	–	–	4
Turning on and twisting in 1 *s.* 6 *d.* to 1 *s.* 9 *d.*, say every four weeks, therefore per week	–	–	5
Tear and wear of loom	–	–	3
	–	3	–

The expenses on two looms:

Winding quills	–	1	6
Extra rent	–	1	6
Lights	–	–	8
Turning on and twisting in	–	–	10
Tear and wear of loom	–	–	6
	–	5	–

On each loom 2 *s.* 6 *d.*

Three looms will give the same expense per loom.

Of the facility of Introduction to the Art of Weaving.

The best mode of showing how men are introduced into the trade will be by an abstract of the personal history of some of the witnesses.

Mr. Samuel Sully, is the son of a weaver, and grandson of a weaver. He was born in 1803. At five years of age, being then at school, he was employed occasionally at winding quills. At 10 he was put to winding silk, a process preparatory to putting the warp on the beam, now done in establishments conducted by the manufacturer himself. He was also put to drawing cords, which serve to pull up portions of the warp in the weaving, which work is now done by the Jacquard loom. At 14 he was put to the loom and did plain work called persians; he made two canes of this work, and then was put to two doubles and three doubles, a light dress for ladies; after 12 months he took to satins, and continued at that work 12 months; he then began with figured goods, being between 17 and 18, and has continued more or less at such work ever since. At 22 he did figured silks for waistcoats, and at 25 began doing plain and figured velvets. For about four years and a half he worked as an apprentice to his brother, though only under a verbal agreement. All the other branches he learned by perseverance and the assistance of persons who were skilful and gave him information.

Mr. Joseph Hoyles, is the son of a weaver, and grandson of a weaver. He was accustomed to wind quills at the period of life when he was at school. At 11 he went to fancy trimming, and worked at that trade till 18, when he left that employment in consequence of slackness of trade. He says, "I took to the silk-weaving, and have now been 18 years at it; I had been familiar with the trade, and I began weaving at once, my father showing me the way. I did my first web so as not to get blame for it, but I took a great deal of time to it, and had my father's superintendence; in 12 months I was master of my business."

He was asked, "Do not many learn sooner?" To which he replied, "When once the silk is put into the loom, and it is all ready, the weaving plain silk is easy; but the preparatory part is difficult to learn, and some will not do it for years."

Mr. Thomas Heath, one of the best weavers of Spitalfields, at 12 years of age went to sea, and was a sailor for 12 years; he returned in 1816, and took to weaving. He says, "I had been accustomed to the winding of quills and drawing when a boy, and accordingly after coming from sea I took to weaving. I worked at plain satin for 12 months, until I got well acquainted with the loom, and then I took to figured work, and have been at it ever since, excepting

ing that I have occasionally done a plain piece of work when no figured work was to be had."

Mr. John Duce gives the following account of his introduction to weaving:

"My father had been a manufacturer of woollen cloth, but I was never taught weaving by anybody, and in 1802, being then 16, I was obliged to take to some employment, and I tried silk-weaving, and succeeded. I began with the easiest kind of work at first, but I have made myself master of almost every branch, and when any kind of work which pays well falls off, I can take another kind of work which pays well, and by so doing I have been able to keep myself better than many others.

"*Q.* Could most men acquire a knowledge of the art as you did?—*A.* There is the greatest difference amongst men; some have a far greater aptitude to learn weaving than others, and pay more attention; it is certain, however, that many men never can get beyond the plainest work, and which pays them the lowest wages."

Of the manner in which the trade is overwhelmed by the introduction of new hands, he gives the following evidence:

"*Q.* Have many men taken to the weaving trade lately?—*A.* Not many lately; there would not have been employment given to them; but whenever the trade is brisk men come to it from other employments, and begin at the simplest work, and such as have ability gradually get to the other branches of weaving, and thus the number of weavers is kept too great.

"Have many apprentices lately been taken on?—I have not heard of many lately; I know of apprentices who have nothing to do, and their masters are in great distress.

"Do women who are not daughters or wives of weavers learn the trade?—Sometimes they get other women to teach them, and during the period when they are learning they may make half as much as will keep them.

"What are the chief sources of the numbers who come into the trade?—The weavers bring up their families to be weavers, from a desire to get something from their labour as soon as possible, and also from inability to get them put out into other trades, and to pay a premium."

Hours of Labour.

It is a very difficult question to arrive at any accurate knowledge of the hours of labour of a weaver: his work is carried on at home; he can begin in the morning when he pleases; he may carry it on to what hour at night he is inclined; he may leave his work, and spend any portion of his time which he may think fit in any other way. Some weavers work very closely when engaged, and exhaust their strength for the day in a less number of hours than others; some work more deliberately, and continue on a greater length of time. From all these circumstances, it occurs that were there the greatest willingness to give correct information, it would not be easy to arrive at an average of the hours of labour.

The difficulty is greatly increased by many of the weavers and their ill-judging friends endeavouring to make it appear, that from dire necessity the weaver works a far greater number of hours than it could be supposed that human nature could endure: hence they will speak of 16 and 17 hours a day. On close examination, these statements are found to be a treacherous kind of falsehood, based on a small degree of truth, which is the kind of misrepresentation the most common of all. The rare and extraordinary instance, sometimes occurring, is put forward as a sample, and the person doing so satisfies his own mind that he is speaking the truth, and wishes other people to believe it.

The weaver occasionally does work a great number of hours; he has generally a sum to receive at the completion of a piece, perhaps the whole price of weaving that piece. If he has had money on account, there is still a considerable balance coming to him. In such cases, more particularly if the weaver see a prospect of getting through his work before Saturday night, he makes most extraordinary exertions, working night and day; and the time so worked is by himself and ill-judging friends put forward as a sample of what he always does. The well-paid

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weaver, who works the usual hours of labour, still does enough to exhaust his strength; and no man capable of reason, who for a moment reflects, will believe that the ill-paid and ill-fed weaver can have strength, from week to week, from month to month, and from year to year, to work the hours which, to a strong well-fed weaver, would be impossible.

Leaving all reflections, and examining the evidence, we shall see what is the real truth.

Mr. John Duce is asked, "What number of hours do you work?" and replies, "I work the average time of most weavers, that is, 12 hours a day; I begin about eight in the morning, and work to eight at night."

"*Q.* You have time for your meals out of these 12 hours?—*A.* Certainly."

From this evidence, it appears that the average hours are 12, from which are to be taken the time for meals, making the time actually spent in the loom about 10 hours: this is quite enough too.

This witness speaks very feelingly of the exceptions to the general rule, in the following terms:—

"There are many who must work much harder, particularly men with only one loom, and perhaps a wife and child, or two children to keep. It grieves me, after I leave my work, to hear the looms going as I pass along the street; but it grieves me much more still to hear them as I come home at 11 o'clock at night. But that is not all: some even work on Sundays, and you will now hear it spoken of in company, and nothing is thought of it. It is a sad necessity which causes all this. No such thing was thought of in former days."

Some witnesses are disposed to make the hours of working longer than what the preceding witness has stated to be usual.

Mr. William Garland is asked, "What hours do you work?" and he replies, "When I have full employment, I work in the summer from six in the morning until dark; and in the winter I work from day-light frequently to 11 at night."

This would be 14 hours a day, from which the meal-times have to be taken. The witness makes two qualifications: one is, "when he has full work," which is not the constant case; and the other is, that he works "frequently" in winter to 11: he does not usually do so.

Mr. Thomas Heath gives the following evidence:—

"*Q.* What number of hours do you usually work?—*A.* From seven in the morning to nine at night; that is 14 hours.

"What time out of these 14 hours do you allow for your meals?—Only about an hour.

"Do many work as late as you do?—Some much longer. You will sometimes hear the looms going at two or three in the morning; and, besides that, in some of the back streets and courts and alleys, where the poorest class of weavers dwell, you will see the lights and hear the looms on Sunday evenings."

It is obvious to reason that no man can make it a custom to work to three in the morning, and rise at the usual time and return to his labour. On extraordinary occasions, extraordinary efforts may be made; but a poor man, ill-fed, constantly living in close air, cannot perform miraculous labour, which the strongest man would be unable to accomplish. These efforts are to be accounted for as already explained. I have no doubt that the weavers, as a body, work when they can obtain anything very industriously, enough to exhaust their strength, and as much as human nature can endure, and to do more is impossible. From 10 to 12 hours actually in the loom may be considered as the general rule.

Immediately connected with this subject is the physical condition of the weavers; in order to show which, I shall give a description of the streets and houses inhabited by the weavers, their habits, state of health, as ascertained by long familiar acquaintance with the district, by frequent personal inspection during the progress of this inquiry, and by the evidence of surveyors and medical men of high reputation.

Respecting

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Respecting the streets which have been erected since 1800 in Bethnal-green, the following description is given by Mr. Benjamin Reed :—

"Many of them are the worst that can be imagined, having no common sewers. The houses generally are of two stories, ground floor and one story above; the foundations of which were often laid upon the turf, or vegetable mould, and have no ventilation between the floors of the principal living rooms and the worst description of undrained soil immediately under such floors. The consequence is, that the exhalation arising from the garden-ground (for so it may be called) produces a dampness, from which the houses are exempt only during very dry weather. The roadway of the streets is of the most wretched kind, often composed of earthy and soft rubbish, and brick-dust saturated with moisture, and in many cases cut up by carts into a mass of mud, without any escape for the water but by soaking into the ground, from whence it makes its way under the houses, and, joined by the oozings from the cesspools, frequently passes off in noxious vapour, and that through the sitting-rooms of the houses I have just described. The walls are of the thickness required by the Building Act, but are in many cases constructed of bad material, half-burnt bricks, and mortar of very inferior description. The timbers are of the cheapest kind, and of course the least durable; and the scantlings the smallest that could be used. The roofs are covered with pantiles, and but few of them pointed, the pitch very bad, scarcely enough to keep them water-tight. But the best idea that I can convey relative to the generality of the houses in question, will be by stating that they were erected by speculative builders of the most scampy class. The houses require constant repair to keep them any way fit for habitation. They may screen from the heat of summer as much as any of this class can be expected to do, but I do not consider that they sufficiently protect from the cold of winter. Altogether, they deserve the attention of the public authorities."

The proprietors of the land being anxious to get an increased rental were glad to negotiate with builders, frequently men of no property, and they advanced to them a certain amount of bricks and timber, securing themselves as a remuneration by an exorbitant ground rent. Of course to such men the propriety of making sewers or drains, or in fact doing anything beyond what was necessary to give an appearance of the property, never once occurred. There was also this obstacle in the way; there were no great sewers into which smaller sewers might run. The ground is exceedingly level, and there is only a very small fall down to the Thames.

The builders having constructed these houses, contrived to sell them in the summer time, when their defects were less visible, or they raised money on the security of the houses, and this was to such men sometimes a more advantageous mode, as they got a larger sum. As to future liabilities, they were aware that a bankruptcy or insolvency would soon relieve them.

The natural consequence has been, that the purchasers of these properties, or the mortgagees or grantees of annuities, have taken possession of the houses, and after a time finding the ground rent, repairs, and taxes more than the rents, have abandoned them to the ground landlords.

Mr. Reed says, "I have known whole streets and courts abandoned at a time."

I am able of my own knowledge to say as much as Mr. Reed.

Mr. Gayton, a witness examined, gives evidence to a similar effect.

In fact, a large portion of the parish of Bethnal-green is such property as not to be worth holding, and it is only necessary to refer to a previous part of this statement, that according to the evidence of the parish officers, out of 11,983 private houses, 11,193 are rated under 20*l.* a year. Persons who know what sort of houses are to be had in London under 20*l.*, will easily understand what is the description of such buildings.

Of the Physical Condition of the Weavers.

That the weavers of Spitalfields are of a small stature has long been matter of public notoriety, although they may not be so much so as commonly described. Many of the witnesses examined have stated, that they were sons and

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and grandsons of weavers, and that their wives were the daughters and granddaughters of weavers. Such men form a caste, and are of small size. There are, however, amongst the weavers men, who after arriving at full growth, have entered into the trade, and are full-sized men. There are also a few, the sons of weavers, of whom the same may be said.

Mr. Lewis, an inspector of the H. division of police, in answer to a question whether there are many weavers possessed of sufficient physical strength to be qualified for the police force, says, "There are a few fine young men amongst them, but I cannot say that there are many."

Mr. Grove, formerly a weaver, and afterwards in the police, says, that "there are very few of the weavers fit for the army or police, but many weavers have been in the Royal navy. They are light and active, and may be rendered very useful on board ship."

Mr. Redfarn, a weaver, has given very striking evidence, of which many persons on reading it have said, it was very correct.

"They are decayed in their bodies; the whole race of them is rapidly descending to the size of Lilliputians. They start in life very well as man and wife, but soon one or two children come, and they still look well enough; but after there are several more, the children must have the food which would be required to support their parents. As they grow bigger, the children look squalid, wretched, and starved. You could not raise a grenadier company amongst them all. The old men have better complexions than the young men."

Mr. Roques, formerly a weaver, and now a pensioner in the French Hospital, and 74 years of age, states, that in his youth the generality of weavers were a diminutive race, but there were many exceptions. "There were men," he says, "as well made in the weaver trade as in any other. I have seen shoemakers quite as weakly as ever I saw weavers; weakly men are often put to such trades." He recollects the Bethnal-green regiment and Spitalfields' regiment of volunteers, during the war, as good-looking bodies of men, but doubts if such men could be raised now.

Mr. Duce concurs with him in the deterioration of the size and appearance within the last 30 years, and attributes it to bad air, bad lodging, bad food, which causes the children to grow up an enfeebled and diminutive race of men.

The medical witnesses enter more fully into the causes which destroy the health and strength of the people of this district.

On the state of Health of the Weavers.

The general physical condition of the weavers, as to appearance, size, and strength, is so obvious, that almost any person may observe it as well as a medical man; and as to the liabilities to particular diseases, and the general state of the constitution, the points are so clearly marked, that there is the most complete coincidence in evidence of all the medical men in London who have been examined; being Dr. Algernon Frampton, Dr. Southwood Smith, Mr. William Godier, resident apothecary of the London Dispensary in Spitalfields, and Mr. Thomas Taylor, the medical officer of half Bethnal-green parish.

The leading characteristic of the weaver's constitution is feebleness. From this cause results inability to resist the causes of disease. Dr. Southwood Smith gives the following example: "I observed on a large scale a striking example of their inability to resist disease, dependent on their low degree of physical strength, during the late visitation of the cholera. When the epidemic made its first appearance in London, the Spitalfields weavers were among the earliest victims." He contrasts this liability of the weavers with the vigour of the Jews living in the same neighbourhood. They are a strong and well-fed race, but temperate as to drinking. It was remarkable, that in the first year of the cholera, when the disease prevailed solely amongst the lower orders, there

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there was not one instance of its attacking any of the Israelitish nation. In the second year of the cholera its ravages extended to the middle and upper classes, and then the Jews suffered, but not in greater proportion than these classes; whilst among the Spitalfields operatives, and chiefly the destitute amongst them, its ravages were most appalling. The same physician states, that "whenever fever prevails epidemically in London, the Spitalfields weaver is sure to be amongst its earliest and easiest victims, and fever is never for a single day, in any season of any year, entirely absent from a considerable portion of the Spitalfields and Bethnal-green districts."

During this spring and summer (1838) fever has prevailed to an unusual extent. Mr. Thomas Taylor enumerates some of the active causes which excite this disease.

"The causes," he says, "are many."

"1st. The number of persons crowded into one house, and into one apartment, tends, under unfavourable circumstances, to produce the disease, and certainly tends greatly to propagate it.

"2d. A want of ventilation. The weavers in the silk trade are afraid to open their windows for fear of admitting foul air, which would affect the more delicate colours of their work. Besides this, any air tends to dry the silk, and diminish its weight, and when they bring it to the scale they would be charged for the deficiency, as if it had been so much silk taken away. Only this day I went into a house where fever prevailed. The windows were not only closed, but absolutely there was paper pasted to keep them so, and shut out the air. They told me that this was done on account of the work. The silk is an article which is a perfect hygrometer, and it imbibes or gives up the moisture very readily.

"3. The ignorance of the people of the benefit of cleanliness. That is a very potent cause. A family in which fever has prevailed will leave a house, and, without the house being cleaned or whitewashed, another family goes into it, and the fever breaks out amongst them.

"4th. Stagnant water is a very powerful cause of fever. Of such water there is an abundance in the streets and in pools in waste grounds about Bethnal-green parish.

"5. Another cause of the continuance of fever is the keeping the bodies of parties who have died of fever for many days unburied; 10 days and a fortnight are not unusual. The cause of this I attribute to the desire of ornamenting the coffin with cloth, &c., which is not allowed in the cases buried at the parish expense."

Mr. Gayton clearly points out the same causes of disease. The occupation of the weaver more particularly exposes him to diseases of the stomach, and to consumption. In his work he presses against his stomach, which cannot fail to be injurious. Many of the masters, and almost all the men, have a strong prejudice against the fly-shuttle, which is successfully used for many fabrics in Manchester. The substitution of this instrument in room of the common shuttle, producing an upright posture, would infinitely benefit the weavers' health. The disorganization of the stomach produces a whole train of diseases, which the medical witnesses have well described. With such a state of constitution, and with such habits, consumption may naturally be expected to ensue. It prevails to a great extent.

Enfeebled parents naturally produce an enfeebled offspring. The weavers of the third and fourth generation are much weaker than the rest of the community. There is a great mortality amongst the children.

Diseases peculiar to females are aggravated amongst girls and married women by the injury done to the constitution by the work of the loom, more particularly at an early age. Difficult parturitions are more frequent amongst the weavers' wives than amongst the rest of the community.

From the state of the constitution of the weaver and his family, an active and vigorous treatment of his diseases is inapplicable. Dr. Southwood Smith states:

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"If he be attacked with inflammation in any vital organ, inflammation of the lungs for example, the ordinary remedies for the disease cannot be employed on him, with nearly as much freedom as is absolutely necessary in other persons. In inflammation of the lungs, in a robust countryman, a ploughman, it may be necessary to take 40 or 50 ounces of blood; in an inhabitant of London, previously in sound and vigorous health, it may be necessary to take, in the same disease, 20 or 30 ounces; but if that quantity of blood were taken from a Spitalfields weaver, it would either so depress the powers of life that there would be no reaction, and the patient would sink rapidly, or he would fall into dropsy, ultimately as fatal as the original disease. The same observation applies to the whole catalogue of diseases to which the hand-loom weaver, in common with all other persons, is liable."

Before concluding this subject it may be a proper place to add, that at Norwich the same system of cautious treatment is found necessary; and that leeches are employed at the Guardians' dispensary instead of the lancet, as not occasioning so great debility. The consumption of leeches is as much as from 7,000 to 8,000 a year.

The mortality in the parish of Bethnal-green, which is more particularly the weavers' parish, as ascertained from the registers, was, for the year ending the 30th June 1838, not less than 2,412. As this, however, was a period of more than usual sickness and mortality, it would be quite unsatisfactory to attempt to form a table of mortality from such experience; but there can be no doubt, that in any year the number of deaths is much greater than might be expected from the amount of population.

It has become less necessary to make any recommendations respecting the local causes of disease in Bethnal-green, as, since the preceding inquiries were made, the subject has been taken up by the Poor Law Commissioners, who have reported on it, and recommend that an Act of the Legislature should pass, authorizing this parish, and others similarly situated, to levy a rate for the purpose of defraying the expense of filling up stagnant ponds, making drains, covering over stagnant ditches, and other purposes, with a view to the prevention of fever. A separate building, not far from the Bethnal-green workhouse, for the admission of persons labouring under contagious disease, will also be of immense service, by enabling to remove persons who may be attacked.

There have been persons who have thought that large public sewers ought to be made throughout this district, the expense to be defrayed by a rate levied on the landlords of the houses, and that a drain from every house should be made into the sewers. But to this plan there are insuperable objections: the expense incurred would in many, perhaps in most instances, be greater than the whole value of the interest of the present leaseholders, mortgagees, and annuitants, in the property of the houses, and they would be obliged to follow the example already set them by many of their brethren, and abandon altogether a property where there was no profit, but loss. Many of the present ground landholders have bought their property since the houses were built, and have given the full value for the ground-rents, and it would be ruinous to them to undergo the taxation required.

No such taxation, therefore, ought to be recommended.

At the same time, however, it may be allowed to express a strong regret that a legislative enactment has not long ago been adopted, by which the building of houses within the districts subject to the Building Act should be prohibited, in all streets and thoroughfares, until such sewerage and drainage should have been provided as would satisfy the surveyor of the Commissioners of Sewers. Bethnal-green is far from being the only district suffering from want of sewers and drains, though nowhere is the evil so great as in that district. On persons about to receive a great increase to their rental, by getting common agricultural land and garden land covered with buildings, the charge would have been reasonable, however unjust and ruinous to the present unfortunate leaseholders and ground landlords of Bethnal-green.

Following

Following the order of the Instructions, I proceed from the pecuniary and physical condition to

The Moral Condition of the Weavers.

This is a branch of the inquiry which is to be treated with great caution, both by the writer and reader. The frailties of which a man is himself guilty, and which are usual with men in the sphere of society in which he moves, he has long since learned to forgive; but the frailties of men in another, and more particularly in a lower station, strike him with all their native deformity. Men in humble life are subjected by their poverty to temptations of which men in easier circumstances can never feel the force. With minds little cultivated by education, they naturally seek pleasure in coarser sensual gratifications. Yet in their humble sphere they exercise virtues, the merit of which men more favoured may neither well understand nor appreciate.

With a strong consciousness of this danger, and with a subdued feeling of mind, it has been attempted to draw up the following Report on the moral condition of the weavers; and as much as possible not to exceed a statement of palpable facts, following the order in which the several subjects are noticed in the Instructions.

The best and most unexceptionable criterion by which to estimate the Religious Character of the weavers is, to show to what extent they observe or neglect public worship. In the parish of Bethnal-green, in which the greater part of the population is directly or indirectly supported by the silk trade, the accommodation for public worship is as follows:

Church and Chapel Accommodation in Bethnal-green.

Population in 1831, 62,018.

No.	Name and Place.	Measure.	Denomination.	Sittings.	Galleries.
1	St. Matthew's Church	- -	Episcopal	2,000	—
2	St. John's Church	- -	- ditto	1,700	—
3	Episcopal Jews' Chapel	- -	- ditto	1,200	—
4	Ebenezer Chapel, Bethnal-green	57 by 36	Independent	650	1
5	Zion Chapel, Essex-road	30 by 17	- ditto	120	no.
6	Shalom Chapel, Oval	45 by 33	- ditto	350	no.
7	Claremont-street Chapel	70 by 19	- ditto	280	no.
8	Middlesex Chapel, Hackney-road	40 by 38	Wesleyan	400	1
9	Austin-street Chapel	26 by 15	Baptist	100	1
10	Virginia Chapel	46 by 17	Independent	150	no.
11	Gibraltar Chapel	48 by 38	- ditto	600	1
12	Tent-street Chapel	30 by 18	- ditto	200	3
13	Missionary Chapel	43 by 31	- ditto	300	no.
14	Abbey School-room	57 by 13	- ditto	150	no.
15	Cambridge-road Chapel	70 by 33	- ditto	800*	4
16	Hephzibah Chapel, Darling-place	44 by 24	- ditto	300	no.
17	Hare-street Chapel	32 by 26	- ditto	350	3
18	St. John-street Chapel	45 by 35	- - Belongs to the French vestry.	450	3
19	Room, York-street	19 by 15	New Connexion	50	no.
20	Providence Chapel, Hackney-road	60 by 42	Baptist	600	no.
21	Hart's-lane Chapel	29 by 22	Wesleyan	160	no.
22	Squire-street Chapel	32 by 22	Baptist	250	3
23	Wolverley-street Chapel	33 by 19	- ditto	150	1
24	Hare-street School-room	40 by 22	Wesleyan	200	no.
25	Domestic Mission Chapel, Spicer-street.	42 by 29	Unitarian	300	no.
26	Friars' Mount School-room	50 by 34	- - - -	300	no.
	For the Population of 62,018 persons the Total Number of Sittings are			12,110	

* School-room throws open into the chapel.

The average attendance is from 5,000 to 6,000. I have never known it to be more than 6,000.

This account is given by the Rev. John Allen, a dissenting minister, who holds the office of superintendent of the missionaries employed by an institution called the London City Mission, of which society Mr. Thomas Fowell Buxton is

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the treasurer, and the Rev. I. Garwood, the minister of Sir George Wheeler's chapel, Spitalfields, belonging to the Church of England, is one of the secretaries.

Mr. Allen states, that he has taken the particulars relative to the consecrated places of worship from the Clerical Guide of 1837, and with respect to all the rest, he has ascertained the dimensions, and the numbers which can be accommodated, by personal examination of the interior, and by actual measurement made by himself. The document which he has furnished may, therefore, be taken as unusually authentic. Now, assuming the population of Bethnal-green at 70,000, and assuming the proportion of the population which might reasonably be expected to attend public worship at 44.44 per cent., as is done by the Commissioners for inquiring into the Accommodation for Public Worship in Scotland, we should expect about 31,000 to be present on any one Sunday morning. On this assumption the evidence of Mr. Allen shows that only one-sixth of those who ought to attend actually do so.

In the parish of Christchurch, Spitalfields, the accommodation for public worship, as ascertained by Mr. Allen, is as follows:

CHURCH and CHAPEL Accommodation, Christchurch, Spitalfields.

Population in 1831, 17,949.

No.	Name and Place.	Measure.	Denomination.	Sittings.	Galleries.
1	Christchurch - - - -	- -	Episcopal - - -	1,800	
2	Sir George Wheeler's Chapel -	54 by 45	- ditto - -	700	3
				2,500	
3	Spitalfields' Chapel - - -	80 by 54	Wesleyan - -	1,500	3
4	White's-row Chapel - - -	67 by 54	Christian Society -	1,200	3
5	Hope-street Chapel - - -	33 by 28	Independent -	350	1
6	Room in White's-row - -	16 by 11	Universalists -	40	no.
			TOTAL - - -	5,590	

The average attendance is from 3,000 to 3,500.

Assuming the population of Christchurch at 20,000, it follows that the number that attends public worship is not much more than one-third of what ought to be expected.

The evidence of Mr. Allen is unhappily but too fully confirmed by every other witness who has given evidence on this subject. Amongst these are the Rev. William Stone, rector of Christchurch, Spitalfields; the Rev. James Mayne, the curate of Bethnal-green; the Rev. Bryan King, of the New Church, Bethnal-green; the Rev. Dr. Sturtevant, a dissenting clergyman; and numerous laymen.

In fact there is no one who differs from the rest on this subject, and it may be held as incontestably proved that only a minority of the weavers afford evidence of their religious character, as ascertained by the test of attendance on public worship.

The excuse most frequently offered for the neglect of public worship is the poverty of the weavers, and their inability to find decent clothing in which to appear in public. But this excuse appears to be a mere pretext, which, indeed, many of them scorn to use. No religious sect is known ever to have taught that good clothes were necessary to render prayers acceptable to God, or that the want of them could relieve from the obligation of public worship. Besides, many of the weavers do not hesitate to go abroad to other places, and there can be no difficulty then in going to a church or chapel, except that they are not inclined. The evidence of the Rev. William Stone seems to set this question at rest.

"*Q.* Among the reasons given for the neglect of public worship it has been stated, that the weavers and other poor persons were prevented from an inability to procure decent clothing, and an unwillingness on their part to appear in a garb so much inferior to that of other people; now, have you reason to believe that that is a genuine statement on their part, or only an excuse?—*A.* The want

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want of good clothing may in part operate on their minds, but I have too much reason to consider it as in a great degree a mere excuse.

"Will you state your reason for so thinking?—I have already given evidence on this subject to the Poor Law Commission of Inquiry. I determined to afford the poor an opportunity of attending Divine service, where they might be by themselves, and not be mortified by the presence of persons much better dressed than themselves. I held a public meeting and explained my views. I opened as a chapel the national school-rooms in Quaker-street, in my parish, capable of accommodating 1,200 persons. There is a population of about 14,000, within five minutes' walk of the place. I performed the service myself, and addressed a sermon to the congregation assembled, in which I specially endeavoured to render myself as intelligible and interesting as I possibly could, and in that I have reason, from inquiry, to believe that I succeeded; but as to the hearers, they were at first about from 300 to 400, but they gradually became fewer and fewer, and at last they dwindled down to about six or seven, and I was obliged, after six months, with much reluctance, to abandon the design as hopeless.

"Have you any idea that the congregation at first consisted of persons who expected some temporal benefit, and that when they found that no bread was given away, nor any other benefaction bestowed, they desisted on that account?—I discovered on inquiry that such was the case. There is a great indisposition amongst them to anything like active mental exercise; they very generally consider that even one attendance upon public worship is an encroachment upon the rest of Sunday.

"A very common way of spending that day is to sit together to talk on indifferent subjects, and to accompany their conversation with occasionally sipping from a pot of porter."

The greater part of the weavers who have been examined have been above the hypocrisy of claiming for the persons of their trade the excuse of want of clothing. They have admitted their indifference to public worship, or at all events, their preference to other modes of spending their time on Sundays.

Of the great body of the weavers there is no other ground for suspecting infidel principles excepting their neglect of public worship. There is, however, a small portion which is openly opposed to revealed truth. Mr. George William Russell, one of the missionaries of the Christian Instruction Society, says, "Perhaps seven or eight in the hundred read Tom Paine. There is a body amongst them called Socialists, who meet in the Curtain-road on Sundays, and listen to a discourse from one of their members; their principles are infidel or semi-infidel. I have attempted access to the death-bed of some of them, but have been prevented by their wives. I do believe that there is one-fortieth of the weavers Socialists. A large proportion of the population cannot read, and their reasoning faculties are in a dormant state."

Mr. Samuel Sully, a respectable weaver, has given the following evidence, which will show the ideas of the main body of the weavers, designated by one of the witnesses as moral, but not religious:

"*Q.* Have you any evidence to offer respecting the moral condition of the weavers?—*A.* Yes; I wish to give evidence on that subject.

"What point first strikes your attention?—The weavers' wives have to work like the men, which is a great injury to their domestic comfort and morals.

"How is that?—The wife in consequence has to toil on the Sabbath-day, to clean the house, to wash and to mend the children's clothes, and to attend to any other matter left undone during the week. In consequence of all this, she is not able to make herself clean, or go out to a place of worship, or in fact to go out at all, till perhaps seven or eight in the evening.

"You have stated that the close application of the wives during the week days leads to the loss of the benefits of the Sabbath; how does the same close application act on the men?—To the same loss of the Sabbath. The men do many little things about the house, which they may see to be required, and repair any defect in their looms.

"Do they weave on the Sabbath-day?—Some do; but even those who do not like to weave, because of the noise being heard by the neighbours, still do

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other work not causing noise, such as picking the pole, that is taking knots off the threads composing the soft part of the velvet, picking knots out of work already made. Some will weave as on other days, thinking it better to work than to starve.

"Hence many of them do not go to a place of worship?—The weavers are seldom able to go to a place of worship, and that leads to a sad perversion of moral character. The same causes render it difficult for a weaver to attend to the instruction of his children, which is a grievous injury to them."

Our instructions direct inquiry to be made as to the amount of scriptural knowledge.

It is here proven that very few attend public worship. In another place it will be shown that an equally small proportion is at all able to read. When men cannot read, and do not attend public worship, it is obvious that there can be no scriptural knowledge; there are, however, most honourable exceptions; "a few names in Sardis" attentive to religious duty, and well instructed in Holy Writ; but in comparison of the great mass, the number is exceedingly small.

One of the modes in which some of the weavers are stated in evidence to spend their Sabbath mornings, is to go out into the fields with bull-dogs, for the purpose of engaging them in ferocious combats. That bull-dogs are seen passing along the streets towards the fields is certain, and it is equally so that these ferocious animals are seen returning with marks which clearly indicate how they have been employed; but that many of them belong to the weavers is more than doubtful. The weavers themselves all deny it, and will readily concede the honour of proprietorship to the butchers of Whitechapel, or to any persons rather than to their own fraternity. One of the witnesses, Mr. Joseph Redfarn, says, "I do not know of 20 bull-dogs in the Fields; 15 years ago there were plenty of bull-dogs, and we now and then had a bull along the streets; now there is never such a thing."

Mr. Lazarus says, "I much doubt there being such a thing as a bull-dog for fighting kept by any Spitalfields weaver."

Mr. Redfarn, however, admits the following description of sporting with singing birds:—

"Men will take their birds to the public-house about 10 or 11 on Sunday mornings, to sing them against each other; but there are not many weavers the proprietors amongst them; there may be a few looking on; the weavers cannot afford to keep birds."

In considering the remedies for the melancholy religious condition of the population of Bethnal-green and Christchurch, Spitalfields, the difficulties on every side are so many, that all which I can venture to do is to recommend the subject to the earnest attention of the ministers and zealous friends of religion.

There is a general complaint amongst the clergy, that since the Act for the registry of births came into force there has been a diminution in the number of children brought to be baptized, many preferring the registration of the birth and names of their children where no expense is incurred, to a registration for which a fee, however small, is to be paid, and feeling indifferent about the religious rite. From the great activity of the deputy registrars the registration of births in Bethnal-green falls scarcely short of the number of births which might be expected from the population, being for the year ending at Michaelmas 1838 not less than 2,066.

On the impression produced on the minds of the people when the Act was about to come into force, the Rev. James Mayne gives the following evidence:—

"Last year when the Registry Act was about to come into force we had in one week 400 baptisms, and in Shoreditch parish they had from 500 to 600 baptisms. The people had formed an opinion that unless it were done before the Act came into force it could never be done at all, and that which they had never thought of doing, when they considered it might be done at any time, they were eager to do, when, from their erroneous impression, they thought it must be done either then or never."

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On referring to the "General Bill of Christenings and Burials within the City of London and Bills of Mortality, by the Worshipful Company of Parish Clerks," for the years 1836, 1837, and 1838, the numbers of christenings are found to be as follows:—

	1836.	1837.	1838.
In the 97 parishes within the walls - -	859	958	794
In the 17 parishes without the walls - -	4,359	6,363	4,119
In the 24 out-parishes of Middlesex and Surrey	18,364	25,948	13,303
In the 10 parishes of the City and Liberties of Westminster - - - - - -	2,673	2,437	1,617
	26,255	35,706	19,833

The number of christenings in 1836 was about an average.

The great increase of christenings in 1837 may be attributed to the cause explained by Mr. Mayne, the ignorant dread of parents that the ceremony could not be performed unless it was done before the Act for registration came into operation.

The number in 1838 being 19,833, is a great diminution even below that of 1836; but returns from several very populous parishes had not been received, and making a proportional allowance for the diminution of christenings in them, the decrease below the number for 1836 is about 2,420; and considering that in 1837 many children were brought to be baptized who, but for the erroneous impression, would probably not have received baptism until 1838, it is obvious that the clergy have not as yet had sufficient evidence to warrant fears to the extent which some of them have entertained.

St. Leonard's, Shoreditch, the church of which is a favourite resort for christenings, exhibits the most remarkable contrast. The number of christenings in 1836 was 2,940, in 1837 it was 5,017, and in 1838 only 2,254.

In St. Matthew's, Bethnal-green, the number in 1836 was 832: in 1837 there is no return; but Mr. Mayne states that there was a large increase, and in 1838 the number was 765.

In Christchurch, Spitalfields, the number in 1836 was 383, in 1837 it was 571, and in 1838 it was 346.

The district inhabited by the weavers in this matter, therefore, has not been distinguishable from the rest of the metropolis.

One of the most remarkable circumstances in the moral history of the people in London is the fact of the askings in church far exceeding the number of actual marriages. This is the case in the Spitalfields district, as well as in other parts of the metropolis. The Rev. James Mayne, the curate of Bethnal-green, states that, from past experience, they expect only three marriages for every four askings. He thus accounts for it:—

"Some may have changed their minds. Designing men may adopt asking in church to deceive young women. Some live together without the ceremony of marriage, and after having families will take up with other women.

"*Q.* Will weavers do such things?—*A.* Some will, but the weavers are not worse than others in this respect; but even amongst the weavers we have instances of men deserting their families."

The asking in church is an homage paid to virtue. It is altogether discreditable within the Spitalfields district for parties to live together without being married, and the asking in church is a concealment.

The weavers do everything in their power to discountenance unlawful associations.

In the societies of Mr. Gibson's weavers, and other manufacturers on the same plan, when a demand is made for the aid to which the member is entitled on the birth of a child, the stewards, before paying the money, require to see the marriage certificate. So also in case of a claim for the death of a wife, the marriage certificate must be produced; and in case of the death of a member, the widow

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who claims the money then payable must show that she really is the legal widow. These facts show that if there be erring brethren, the main body do not partake of their guilt.

The number of marriages celebrated in the parish church of Bethnal-green for the year ending the 30th of June 1838, according to the evidence of the Rev. James Mayne, was 170, which is not a third of what might be expected from the amount of population. It is said that parties go to the churches of the neighbouring parishes, and Shoreditch has been named as a favourite resort; but, on searching the registers of that parish, it appears that the number of marriages celebrated in the church of that parish for the year ending the 30th June 1838, was exactly 600, which is not more than might be expected from its own population. There appears therefore no means of ascertaining where the marriages of the Bethnal-green people are actually celebrated.

Of the 170 marriages celebrated at Bethnal-green church during the year ending the 30th of June 1838, there are only two men who are registered as under 21 years of age, and of the females only five. It has been asserted by several witnesses, that marriages amongst persons under age are exceedingly common, and so it perhaps may be; but as many go to be married in other parishes, and as it is impossible to distinguish Bethnal-green people in the registers of those parishes, there is no method of proving or disproving the fact. It is quite probable that the fear of ridicule may induce very young couples to go to be married where they are less likely to be known.

In the case of the marriages which actually take place at Bethnal-green church, the Rev. James Mayne distinctly proves that there is seldom any external appearance of any previous imprudence, as has been asserted incorrectly by persons giving evidence respecting this district.

In other parts of the metropolis the number of banns published greatly exceeds the number of marriages consequent upon such publication; so that in this respect there is little difference between the one end of town and the other.

In the parish of St. James, Westminster, of which the population in 1831 was 37,053, the number of banns published for the five years, from 1833 to 1837, inclusive, was 1,832, from which there was no subsequent marriage in 416 cases; being 227 in the 1,000, which is very little different from the proportion in Bethnal-green.

The next branch of inquiry into the moral condition of the weavers is thus stated in the instructions of the Central Board:—

"The extent of their knowledge, with particular, but not exclusive, reference to their own trade; how far they understand the principles of the machinery and implements which they employ, and the means of improving them; whether they are acquainted with the number and comparative accessibleness of the markets for their labour, or generally with the means of bettering their condition; whether they subscribe to book societies, or frequent mechanics' institutes, or show any and what desire of intellectual pleasure or improvement."

Respecting these subjects, I now report in the order in which they are laid down:—

Of the weaver's knowledge of the most skilful use of the instruments of his trade, the most beautiful fabrics which he is continually producing must be considered as abundant evidence; but there are few, exceedingly few, who can be said to possess a scientific knowledge of the principles of mechanics, or ever think of the means of improving the implements which they employ. There are some, however, according to Mr. Hoyles, "who can calculate all the operations to a nicety." It would be unreasonable to look for many such men. There is in every trade the strongest bias to do as others have done before them, and a great dislike to adopt new modes of action. As such is invariably the case with almost all men, it would be a miracle if the weaver should be the exception.

The weavers are strongly attached to the locality to which they have been accustomed, and rarely, if ever, think of a market for their labour, by removing to a distant place. It is only with men whose views have been enlarged by early education, and who have been taught to familiarize their minds with remote countries, that the idea of removal to a new and better market

market for their own labour is to be expected to be entertained. With any other class of men, a removal must be the result of dire necessity.

The Reading weavers stated, that a weaver would rather live on bread and cheese in a place to which he was accustomed, than remove to another place where he might live on roast beef.

Of Book Societies.

Of book societies the return must be *nil.* Mr. Sully, Mr. Duce, and some others attempted to establish a reading society, but it proved a failure. They obtained some excellent works, and met on Sunday evenings to hear them read, but it was soon found that the men were exhausted by their week's work, and wanted relaxation on the Sabbath-day. There are no coffee-shops where the customers may read newspapers and cheap publications, as the Mechanics' Magazine, the Penny Magazine, Saturday Magazine, or Chambers' Journal. Mr. Sully states, that when unstamped newspapers were to be had for a penny, many of the weavers purchased them; but since these disappeared, there are few newspapers bought. "The difference of expense, even a penny, is an object to a weaver."

Dr. Sturtevant laments that the infidel part of the weavers read penny infidelity, and Sunday newspapers of an objectionable character.

Mechanics' Institutions.

The result of the Mechanics' Institution, established in Spitalfields in 1825, and intended chiefly for the benefit of the weavers, unhappily proves that the instruction which such institutions is intended to convey is far beyond what they are qualified to receive or to enjoy. The experience of other towns in the district over which my inquiries have extended painfully corroborates the same conclusion.

The Spitalfields institution was established under high patronage. The Marquis of Lansdowne munificently subscribed 100 *l.*; Mr. Gibson, Mr. Graham, and some other master-manufacturers, subscribed liberally, and a sum of about 700 *l.* was raised. Soon after the first opening of the institution there were several hundred members; the different classes for instruction in the elementary, and in the more advanced branches of knowledge, were numerously attended: but in the second quarter there was a great falling off, and by the end of the first year the institution presented only a skeleton of what it had been.

Mr. Charles Thomas Masterman states, that 200 weavers joined the institution at first, but soon left it; that it has since been removed to the Hackney-road, and that there are many members; but he is not aware of there being any weavers amongst them. Mr. Joseph Hoyles, in reply to a question why the weavers did not support the institution, replies, "There were several reasons: one was, the hour of eight o'clock, when the lectures commenced, was too early; the weavers seldom leave off work so as to have time to make ready by that hour. Then the course of instruction was beyond their capacity and acquirements. There was also a fear of their trade being injured by machinery, which was occasioned by a lecture on the steam-engine, and an address from Dr. Birkbeck. There was a prejudice also from master manufacturers being on the committee."

Mr. Masterman gives evidence as to the alarm produced by the recommendation to the weavers to make themselves acquainted with the mechanic powers. Mr. William Kincaid, to a certain extent, concurs, but considers that the effect of this address was not so great as supposed. The truth seems to be, that from the reasons given by Mr. Hoyles, the weavers had become weary of the institution, and this address supplied an occasion for abandoning it.

The attention of the Assistant Commissioner is next directed, in his instructions, to the following subjects relative to the weavers: "Their habits, with

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reference to diligence, providence, frugality, honesty, and temperance. To their diligence, attention has already been directed. As to their providence and frugality, the Assistant Commissioner will inquire into the modes of their expenditure; whether economical or wasteful, and whether for purposes of immediate or permanent enjoyment; to what extent they save when their earnings exceed the average, and how their savings are invested; whether they subscribe to benefit or friendly clubs, or savings' banks, or to other institutions of a similar nature; what is the average age of marriage in each sex, and the capital, or stock, if any, previously accumulated, and whether in money, clothes, furniture, or in what other form. As to their honesty, he will inquire into the degree in which embezzlement of their masters' property, which has been attributed particularly to the silk-weavers, prevails; and, generally, what are the frauds to which they are peculiarly tempted in their respective trades, and how far those temptations are yielded to. And with respect to their temperance, he will inquire to what extent they use stimulants, and of what kinds, and what is the effect on their bodies and minds."

On these heads the following information has been obtained:

As to the habits of the weavers "with reference to diligence, providence, honesty, and temperance," respecting which the Assistant Commissioners are instructed to inquire, it is necessary to premise, that in so numerous a body as the weavers of the district of Spitalfields there is the greatest possible diversity, from a very highly respectable class of workmen down to a set of men who are the disgrace of the trade, and who would never be employed in it were it not that occasionally there is an extraordinary demand, and the manufacturers are then eager to avail themselves of every man who will throw a shuttle.

Mr. Grove, formerly a weaver, now a respected officer of the Worship-street Police-office, obligingly recommended by Mr. Broughton the magistrate to give evidence, states, "It will not be doing justice to the weavers, nor sufficiently explaining their moral condition, unless they be divided into three classes:

"1. Very respectable.
"2. Respectable, but less so than the former.
"3. The refuse of all."

He estimates the first class at 1,000, the second at 3,000, and the third at 1,000.

Mr. Joseph Hoyles, a member of the Tabernacle congregation, takes a more religious basis of distribution, and classes the weavers as follows:

"1. The religious and moral.
"2. The moral who are not religious.
"3. The dissolute."

He reckons the first class to be only one-twentieth of the whole number.

Mr. Grove's first class includes a certain number of Mr. Hoyles's second class, the moral but not religious, and with this difference, their classification nearly corresponds. The evidence of all the other witnesses, though less explicit, sufficiently agrees with this arrangement.

"The first class," Mr. Grove states, "are almost always in full employment, and at a description of work which pays best. If they should be out of employment at a time, their wages in brisk times enable them to make up their loss. Some of these weavers live in their own freehold houses, and some of them live in houses built upon ground held by a long lease."

Mr. Hoyles says, "I have been a visiter connected with the congregation of the Tabernacle, and in that capacity have visited many families in times of sickness and distress, and the families of weavers as well as of others, and I will say that I have seen amongst them more decency and homely comforts than in the houses of persons whose incomes were much larger. I have visited the houses of carpenters, shoemakers, and bricklayers, and the weavers are second to none of them."

Of the second class of weavers it is not necessary in this place to enter into particulars.

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Of the third class of weavers, very correctly designated as the "refuse of all," and "the dissolute," there is little or no discrepancy amongst the witnesses, except as to their number. Mr. Lazarus states the habitual drunkards to be only 100 in number; but his friend Mr. Redfarn, who gave his evidence in his presence, says that he thinks that the drunkards are 300 in number, besides several hundreds more who occasionally get drunk. Mr. Grove estimates their number at 1,000, and perhaps this may not be far from the truth. He thus describes them: "They are idlers, drunkards, and careless incompetent workmen; they are employed only in very brisk times when there is a great demand for work; they are the first to feel the revulsion of trade and be discharged; they are the last that are taken on. It is this class which furnishes the drunken and disorderly characters which appear at the police-office, and some come more than once, and even some over and over again. It is this class which produces the embezzlers. I have never seen a man of the first class at the police-office in custody, and only very seldom a man of the second class, but of the worst class there are but too many."

To the statement of Mr. Grove it may be added, that it is this dissolute class of weavers which is ready to run after public charities, and to raise a cry for public subscriptions, and which tends to lower the body of the weavers in public estimation. The other weavers stand aloof from them with disgust, and lament that through them the character and respectability of the weavers should be so much depreciated.

Of the general moral condition of the weavers the Rev. Bryan King, of St. John's Church, has given in a few words a good general comprehensive account:—

"That the condition, religious, moral, intellectual, and physical, of this class of operatives is of a decidedly lower standard than that of the other trades of their neighbourhood, appears to be an almost universally recognised fact. But though there is reason to fear that this opinion is in general too correct, I know of several, and have reason to believe that there are very many splendid exceptions. Indeed the instances which I have met amongst this class of labourers of vigorous self-cultivated intellectual powers, and elevated standard of moral and religious feeling, surpass any examples which I have ever witnessed among persons of a corresponding station in society; and perhaps the causes of this apparent contradiction in the extremely opposite character of the weavers may be traced in the nature and character of the occupation itself. To a person of prudence and frugality, and in other respects of ordinary well-regulated moral habits, there are perhaps few occupations of a similar grade which offer equally favourable opportunities for the developement of a high moral and even intellectual character. The circumstance of the weaver's work being necessarily performed in his house, in the midst of his family, would appear especially favourable to the growth of the domestic virtues and charities both in himself and his children. The fact of his working by the piece ensures a steady attention and perseverance in his employment, whilst the nature of the work itself stimulates the mechanical ingenuity of the workman, by its constant demand upon his invention for contrivances to meet the ever-varying patterns. But, on the other hand, the extreme alterations of occupation and idleness experienced in a trade subjected to commercial changes in common with others, and to the caprices of fashion, perhaps far exceeding all other employment, these alterations acting upon persons who are unprepared by moral habits of providence and frugality to provide for such contingencies, must evidently degrade the great mass of minds which are subjected to its operation."

Improvidence.

Of the weavers there are exceedingly few who attempt to lay up any part of their wages.

Mr. William Wallis, Secretary of the Royal Adelaide Provident Institution, gives the following evidence:—

"*Q.* Are there many weavers who are in the habit of saving any part of their wages to meet the wants of a future day?—*A.* I do not know of any, and I have not heard of any; and, from what I know of them, I very much doubt if

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any do. The wages are now so low, that very few, and these only men without families, could by possibility make any savings."

Mr. Charles Cole, as a reason for not belonging to the Mechanics' Institution, says,

"Mr. Gibson asked me to belong to it, but I told him I could not afford it. He said, 'Surely you can afford a pound a year.' I said, 'No; I never find that I have a pound over at the end of the year, and therefore I have not a pound to spare;' so I never joined it."

Witnesses out of number could be adduced to prove that, in point of fact, the weavers do not save money; and in almost every instance, if the witness were himself a weaver, he would state that it was impossible. That such is the general state of things with all classes of workmen as well as with the weavers, it is to be feared is too true. In most other trades there are, however, a number of exceptions; and if there be fewer exceptions amongst the weavers than amongst others, their poverty may not unfairly be admitted to be cause of the difference.

The following remarkable evidence is given by Mr. James Fox respecting the least provident class of weavers:—

"There is a species of dealing, which is in fact pawnbroking, now got into use. There were weavers who, after pawning their clothes, and all their furniture, would at last pawn their looms and tools, and the party receiving the looms and tools would lend money, at an interest of 100, and even 150 per cent. Some prosecutions were threatened, and this practice is discontinued as to form, but is continued as to substance. A weaver now takes his loom, and the shopkeeper buys it, but at the same time verbally undertakes, that so long as he is paid 1*d.* in the shilling per month on the money which he has paid, he will keep the loom, and will at any time sell it back again for the same price at which he bought it. This is, in fact, taking it on pawn at 100 per cent interest.

"*Q.* Are there many whose necessities or improvidence compel them to resort to such ruinous expedients?—*A.* I fear a great many. Our society, last year redeemed looms, or gave looms in gift, to the number of 140, at the expense of 90*l.* 10*s.* 6*d.* This year, we have found 10 or 12 cases of those very parties having again pledged their looms in the manner stated.

"The trade generally cannot do such a thing?—The majority of the trade is disgusted at the conduct of such persons; there are many in the trade who are disgusted at the appeals so often made to public benevolence, and would do anything rather than apply for any charity. These are the parties whom we expect to be the members of the Adelaide Institution."

Of Parochial and Charitable Aid.

In the district of Spitalfields this branch of the subject has been so fully sifted by the inquiries of the former, and of the present Poor Law Commission, that it would be superfluous to enter much into it.

Bethnal-green is the parish which is more particularly the abode of the weavers.

Under the present administration of Bethnal-green, the number of persons a burden on the parish, and receiving out-door relief, is much diminished. In the week ending 28th of April 1838 it was 1,384; but in the corresponding week of 1837 it was 1,914, and in the corresponding week of 1836 it was 4,909.

One of the most effectual means of protecting the parish is that described by the parish officers:—

"We have now a stone-yard and oakum-rooms, to which we can send men to work, and many applicants decline earning relief by any work. Our applications are greatly diminished by the stone-yard and oakum-rooms. There are parties of eight or ten now going about the street with begging petitions rather than go into the stone-yard or oakum-rooms."

The 1,384 receiving out-door relief when the inquiry was made were "nearly all weavers, widows of weavers, and members of their families. Perhaps about

150 of the 1,384 might be carpenters, tailors, and sundry labourers out of employment, including their families."

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In respect of aid from individuals and from subscriptions, it has been most clearly made out in former inquiries, that large sums have been raised; that there has been very gross abuse; and that very many persons not weavers have crowded into Spitalfields, with a view to participate in the benefactions intended for them only. The weavers, as a body, cannot fairly be said to have been concerned in any abuses, although it be true as regards a large number of individuals. The weavers, in general, feel most acutely the disgrace which has unfortunately been attached to them, from the misconduct of a certain number, and these the least respectable of their body. On almost every other subject, in giving evidence, they manifested much mildness; but in speaking of the character for morality of their trade, it was evident how strongly they felt any imputation which might be cast upon it.

On the Temperance of the Weavers.

It is most gratifying to find on inquiry, that, as compared with the rest of the population in the metropolis, the weavers are decidedly a sober people. This I have ascertained from three sources.

1. The number of public-houses in the several parishes of the Holborn, Finsbury, and Tower Hamlets division.

2. The comparison between the liquor drunk in one of the public-houses in the Spitalfields district and the public-houses in other parts.

3. The evidence of the police respecting the cases of disorderly conduct which bring men under their notice.

All these sources of evidence are decidedly in favour of the weavers, and prove that they are at least *de facto* a sober class of men.

On Public-Houses.

The following table will show the relative number of the population to the public-houses in the several districts.

In the first column is the population, as ascertained in 1831.

In the second column is the number of public-houses in these districts in the beginning of 1838, furnished to me by Robert M'William, Esq., one of Her Majesty's justices of the peace for the county of Middlesex.

The third column is found by dividing the number of people by the number of public-houses, and shows the number of people for each public-house. This is on the assumption that there has been no increase of the people in the seven years between 1831 and 1838; but as an increase no doubt has taken place, the number of people to each public-house is actually greater; but there are no data to enable me to make a nearer approximation.

	Population in 1831.	Number of Public-Houses.	Number of People to each House.
Holborn Division:			
St. Giles in the Fields	36,432	108	337
St. George's, Bloomsbury	16,475	47	350
Duchy Liberty	410	24	17
St. John's, Hampstead	8,588	29	296
Rolls' Liberty	2,682	12	224
Saffron Hill	9,529	34	280
St. George-the-Martyr	27,334	26	253
St. Andrew's, Holborn		82	
Paddington	14,540	32	454

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	Population in 1831.	Number of Public-Houses.	Number of People to each House.
Finsbury Division:			
St. James's, Clerkenwell	47,634	93	400
St. John's, Clerkenwell		26	
Finchley	3,210	13	247
Fryars	615	6	102
Glass House Yard	1,312	8	164
Hornsey	3,043	21	145
Islington	37,316	86	434
St. Luke's	46,642	112	416
St. Sepulchre	4,769	20	238
Newington	3,480	7	497
Tower Hamlet Division:			
Whitechapel	30,733	113	272
Aldgate	3,453	19	182
St. Catherine's	72	3	24
St. John's, Wapping	3,564	29	123
Shadwell	9,544	73	131
Ratcliffe	9,741	51	191
St. Anne, Lime-house	15,695	46	341
All Saints, Poplar	16,849	59	285
Bromley	4,846	13	373
Bow	3,371	18	187
St. John's, Hackney	31,047	67	463
Bethnal-green	62,018	121	513
Shoreditch	68,564	158	434
Christchurch, Spitalfields	17,949	54	332
Norton Folgate	1,918	24	79
St. George's in the East	38,505	98	393
Mile-end Old Town	33,898	77	440
Mile-end New Town	7,384	21	352

I have received information, from an authority which I cannot doubt, that, on the average, there is almost exactly double the quantity of beer drunk in a public-house in St. Luke's, as compared with what is drunk in a public-house in the parish of Bethnal-green.

The evidence of the police establishes the same fact, that there is less drinking amongst the weavers than in other classes of working people. A comparison of the district of Spitalfields was made with St. Luke's, because that was the nearest large parish in which there were no weavers, and in which was a large body of working men.

Mr. Grove was asked:—"Making a comparison between Spitalfields and any neighbouring district, say, for instance, St. Luke, which of the two will yield, from the same number of people, the greater number of drunkards and disorderly characters?—There will not be one from Spitalfields for three from the other. If we set aside the class which I have spoken of as the refuse, I can say of all the rest that I do not know a body of men that are more industrious, steady, and persevering, and which less indulges in drinking."

Whilst such is the general character of the weavers, as a body, in regard to temperance, there are not a few exceptions from the class called by some of the witnesses the dissolute or the refuse of all. But there are other trades which yield a much larger proportion. Mr. Grove says, "The shoemakers are the most drunken of all, and next to them are the tailors. The weavers come next. The bricklayers are better than the weavers, and the carpenters, as a body, are less drunken than any of them."

Mr. Lewis, inspector of the H. division of police, states that there has been less drinking of late years than formerly; and he attributes this to a fall in wages, depriving the dissolute weavers of the means. He thinks them worse than the generality of the people. As soon as they receive their money they spend it all in drinking. The police are seldom called in to quell disturbances in

in the public-houses; the disturbances take place in the street, more particularly on the Saturday night, when they go home singing along the street.

Mr. James Pye, a police constable, 111 K., selected by the inspectors of that division to give evidence, says that they are less troublesome than in other districts. "When they are taken into custody, they talk a great deal, and argue the law, and it appears very simple to us. They talk largely, but we find amongst other little people that they boast very much."

When fined, they are seldom able to pay the money; after a short imprisonment the magistrate discharges them. Mr. Pye says, sometimes their wives go round the neighbourhood, and raise a charitable contribution to pay the fine and obtain immediate release.

Many of the weavers deplore much the intemperance into which their weak brethren unfortunately fall. Mr. Joseph Pillar, in reply to a question as to what he thought could be done to benefit the morals of the population of Bethnal-green, replies,

"I wish there were no gin-palaces open on the Sunday mornings; many a poor child is thereby deprived of its Sunday dinner. A man who receives his wages late on a Saturday night goes out on the Sunday morning, and first meets one companion and then another, and at last gets intoxicated altogether."

Mr. John Duce says, "Many are exceedingly desirous that the gin-palaces and public-houses were altogether shut up on Sunday mornings. Many would sign a petition to that effect; the weavers' wives would unanimously support it."

Mr. Sellar gives evidence to the same effect.

Of Benefit Societies.

There is no subject on which the working classes are less ready to give information than as to whether they belong to benefit societies.

In the returns obtained by the Factory Commissioners respecting many thousand workmen, they almost invariably denied being members of such societies. Such being the case, it is not surprising that the weavers in Spitalfields have given but little information on this head. Enough, however, has come to light to show that there are still some benefit societies, though far fewer than what formerly existed. Several benefit societies in the district had been broken up, which was felt as a great loss by those members who had paid their contributions for many years, in the hopes of benefit in their old age. There are several societies, called Birmingham societies, the principle being to divide at the end of the year what may remain of the funds amongst the members, and then begin afresh for the next year. There are many burial societies, of which I shall now give some account.

Of Burial Societies.

These institutions are on all hands considered to be very numerous, and to be well supported. The usual rule is to pay a premium of from 1 *s.* 6 *d.* to 1 *s.* 9 *d.* every quarter, according to the age, and for which, in case of death, a sum of 5 *l.* is paid to the widow or representatives of a member. The money is not usually all spent at the funeral, and the burial society is in fact a mutual insurance society on a small scale.

There is the greatest anxiety amongst the weavers to secure the means of a decent funeral; and not only the relations, but his fellow-workmen take a deep interest in the matter. When a society like that of Mr. Gibson's workmen have a sum of money to pay to the widow, the stewards first see the body in the coffin before giving the money. It was explained to me that their object for this precaution was to make certain that the deceased was to be buried respectably, and not in a coffin provided by the parish. Mr. Taylor, one of the parochial surgeons of Bethnal-green, states, that funerals are sometimes

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delayed as long as a fortnight, in order that the surviving relatives may obtain money to enable them to conduct the funeral in a manner agreeable to their own feelings, and to the respect due to the dead.

Of Savings Banks.

From the inquiries from persons out of number in the district of Spitalfields, no one individual was heard of who was a depositor in a savings bank; no one believed in the existence of any such person.

This information was unhappily too fully confirmed on inquiry at the London Provident Institution, or bank for savings, in Blomfield-street, Moorfields.

Mr. James Hutchinson, the actuary, stated that in former days the weavers of Spitalfields were a most important class of depositors; this was before they lost "the book."

A single family has been known to pay in as much as 4 *l.* or 5 *l.* in one week, and there were many families who deposited largely; and winders, warpers, and other persons connected with the silk trade, had their accounts, and came to the office in a dignified step of contented independence. All that for many years is at an end. That class of contributors is lost, and amongst the 25,613 contributors, they are so few as not to attract any attention at all. Some instances of accounts of weavers may still remain open, but if so, they are exceedingly few in number. There are 16,490 small accounts, averaging 4 *l.* 8 *s.* 4 *d.* The small accounts of this savings bank have become much more numerous than formerly, since the Poor Law Amendment Act came into force; but of the new accounts, there are none which come from Bethnal-green.

Mr. Robert Ritherdon, the ledger-keeper of the Provident Institution, confirmed the evidence of the actuary. A research of the books showed, that amongst the 1,000 accounts last opened at the bank, there were only two opened by the weavers.

There is one very important point relative to savings bank generally, to which Mr. Hutchinson called attention. The bank loses by all its small accounts. The Government allows to the bank an interest of 3 *l.* 16 *s.* 0½ *d.* per annum, and the bank allows to the depositors 3 *l.* 5 *s.* 2 *d.*, reserving therefore 10 *s.* 10½ *d.* on the interest of 100 *l.*, for expenses. The average of expense of management for each account is 1 *s.* 9 *d.*, therefore to yield that sum an account ought to be about 16 *l.*; but an account of 10 *l.* gives only 1 *s.* 1 *d.*, and an account of 5 *l.* gives only 6½ *d.* On all small accounts under 16 *l.* the bank loses, and this loss is made up in the case of the London Provident by the profit on the accounts above 16 *l.* It is the interest of the bank, and it is for the benefit of the smaller accounts, that there should be large accounts; but the present Act for the regulating savings banks prevents large accounts, and interposes many obstacles in the way of investments in saving banks.

The reason for doing so is, because the Commissioners for the Reduction of the National Debt, to whom the savings bank money is delivered, pay a larger interest than the money will yield to them from the stock which they purchase. This is an unsound principle; it is taxing the country to bribe men to benefit themselves. The Commissioners should not pay a higher interest than they can afford to do without loss, and then there would be no occasion for such restrictions as at present against any man placing money in a savings bank.

There is a savings bank in Osborne-street, Whitechapel, situate in the immediate vicinity of the district inhabited by the weavers. On inquiry there the information received was, that out of the 1,000 accounts last opened, only 21 were by weavers, of which five had been withdrawn, leaving 16 accounts, amounting together to 152 *l.* 15 *s.*, averaging 9 *l.* 10 *s.* 11¼ *d.* each. There were also three accounts opened by women who were weavers, the amount 50 *l.* 1 *s.*, averaging 16 *l.* 13 *s.* 8 *d.* each.

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Under this head of the inquiry seems the best place to introduce an account of an institution called,

The Royal Adelaide Provident Institution.

In the spring of 1837 there was great distress in the silk trade, consequent on the commercial crisis which had taken place, and the loss for a time of the American market. Amongst other measures attempted for the relief of this distress was a ball at Almack's, under very high patronage, which was advertised to be "for the benefit of the Spitalfields weavers," and which produced a large profit.

Several of the parties concerned with the ball, in concert with some of the silk manufacturers, thought that instead of spending the whole of this money in relieving immediate distress, it would be better to make it a capital upon which to establish a permanent institution; and which, in consideration of the patronage graciously bestowed by Queen Adelaide, they called by her name.

This application of the money so raised excited much disappointment to the suffering weavers, and the body of them generally have not approved of the institution.

Mr. John Duce, who presided at a public meeting held on this subject, states,

"One objection was, that the money which was made the basis of that fund was raised from the public for the purpose of relieving the existing distress, and not for a fund against a future day; but our chief objection was, that the weavers admitted as members were to have no share in the management, and it thereby militated against their independent feelings and right of self-government, the whole power being vested in a self-elected committee."

The following is the first rule of the institution:

"Operatives engaged in the Spitalfields silk-weaving, desirous of providing against distress when out of employment, may join this institution, if introduced by two members, by paying the following subscriptions: namely, if a single loom, the sum of 2*d.* per week; if two looms, the sum of 3*d.* per week; if three and not more than four looms, 1½*d.* per week for each loom; and for every loom above four to pay 2*d.* per week, and be entitled to the following benefit: namely, any person having only one loom, and that loom out of work, will be entitled to the sum of 8*s.* per week; if two looms, 7*s.* per week each loom; if three or four, 6*s.* per week each; if above four, 5*s.* per loom for as many as may be out of work, subject to the provisions contained in the following regulations. Members to be free in six months; but all persons joining within two months from the formation of the society will become free at the expiration of three months."

The payments to be made and the benefits to be received in each of the several cases are nearly the same, and, omitting fractions, it may be stated, that if only one-twelfth of the members should be out of employment, and were there no expenses of management, the receipts would be equal to the disbursements. But allowing that all members should be industriously inclined, the past experience of the trade amply proves a larger proportion will on the average be out of employment, and the contributions are clearly inadequate to afford the benefits proposed.

Mr. William Wallis, the secretary of the institution, admits this to be the case, and states that "there is a guarantee fund to supply the deficiencies in the contribution, and it is expected that further funds will be obtained, by subscriptions and other means, from benevolent individuals, to enable the committee to perform what is stated."

Here, then, is an institution proposing to effect independence of character, and yet itself based on alms, necessarily required for its existence.

This institution is most obviously a bounty on improvidence and idleness. A man by belonging to it may be idle, and get back from 11 to 12 times what he has paid in.

If a man, therefore, can overcome his own sense of independence, and belong to this institution, he may easily make a serious inroad on its funds; and it is obvious, that besides the expense of management, it has only to have a small proportion of the weavers its members to be speedily brought to ruin.

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In rule 6, the society proposes to advance money on loans. Experience has no doubt by this time proved the expediency of putting an end to this part of their plan.

In rule 7, the society undertakes to give six per cent. to money deposited with them, but not content with the encouragement afforded by such a heavy interest, there is the following most curious proposal:

"Any members, male or female, making a deposit of part of their weekly earnings, should they not marry before reaching the age of 25 years, will be entitled, in addition to the interest as above, to have a sum equal to one-fourth of the amount so standing in the name of the depositor added to the said sum by the society, as a reward for persevering prudence."

After all that has been said of the propensity of the females to early marriage, did the framers of these rules imagine that love bore so little sway in their breasts, that for the sake of having 3*d.* added to their 1*s.*, they would refuse an offer when they had it, and choose to remain single until 25 years of age? We may rest fully assured that no female will ever apply for this reward except such as has not had the opportunity of forfeiting it.

The concluding four lines of the rules are as follows:

"The secretary shall make a list every week of all the members receiving money from the funds of the society in respect to rule 4, and place the said list in a conspicuous part of the society's office."

So this is the mode of promoting independence of feeling, the names of the members availing themselves of that to which they are entitled are to be exposed to view in a conspicuous part of the society's office.

This society has been noticed, not so much on account of its individual importance, but as showing the nature of the last of the societies established for the remedy of the poverty of the weavers of the Spitalfields district.

I now proceed to another most important subject connected with the moral condition of the weavers, which deserves a full and special consideration.

On Embezzlement.

The weavers as a body have been charged with a propensity to this crime, and our instructions direct attention to inquiry into the subject. From all the information which I have been able to obtain, the impression on my mind is, that there is far less embezzlement than previous accounts, and the reports respecting such matters in the north of England and in Scotland, would have led to expect. Many manufacturers are ready to speak highly of the moral honesty of the operatives as a body; and when it is recollected how often the weaver is in deep distress, and has a portable and saleable property under his absolute control, it is no small trial of his virtue under such circumstances to restrain himself.

There is undeniable evidence that amongst some select bodies of weavers the embezzlement is so small as to be almost an invisible fraction. The weavers employed by Mr. Thomas Field Gibson are all formed into a society, partaking of the nature of a benefit society, but also undertaking to indemnify their employer for any loss which he may sustain by the misconduct of any of their number. Now, in eight years, there have been only two cases of embezzlement from the whole number. I have critically analysed the printed annual accounts of this society, and find that the proportion of the value of the property embezzled to the amount of the wages paid was only 1*s.* 6$\frac{3}{4}$*d.* in the 100*l.*; and assuming that the wages were only one-fourth the value of the property committed to the weavers' care, then the whole embezzlement was only 5*d.* in 100*l.*, or only one part in 4,800.

I have seen the printed accounts of the society of workmen of Messrs. Stone & Kemp for the year ending 1837. There was only one case of embezzlement, being to the amount of 2*l.*, being little more than 1*d.* in the 100*l.* of the property committed to the weavers' care.

Honesty beyond this we need hardly expect ever in this world to find.

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This however is a favourable sample; the men of these societies at their admission had to undergo the rigorous scrutiny of a body interested in the investigation, and every member knew that if he should transgress he would draw upon himself the vengeance of a body of men who could zealously vindicate their honour; still we have a splendid example, in which the weavers may glory.

The main body of the weavers may be considered as honest a class of tradesmen as we may reasonably expect to find; occasional frailties occur, but they are not frequent.

In the class called the "refuse of all" and the "dissolute" instances of embezzlement are unhappily more frequent.

Mr. Charles Cole, the secretary of the committee of weavers, has given the following evidence:

"*Q.* Does much embezzlement now take place?—*A.* I fear that there is more than there used to be formerly when the book prices were in force. I do not recollect above one instance before 1826; before that time it was thought horrible to commit such an offence.

"How do you know that embezzlement has prevailed since that time?—The magistrates ordered the convicted culprits to be publicly flogged, and there have been as many as four flogged in Bethnal-green in the space of one year.

"What feeling amongst the spectators was excited by this public punishment?—Many looked on it as a public show, without any other sensation than at any other public exhibition; but many expressed much sympathy for the unhappy men, considering the offence to arise from their extreme misery. This mode of punishment has for some time been discontinued.

"Do you think, taking all in all, that embezzlement prevails to any great extent?—I do not believe it does; certainly not one weaver in a year appears at the Central Criminal Court.

"Do many weavers have their webs robbed?—Very few, almost none. The police force is a very great benefit in Spitalfields. The houses of the weavers are slight and easily broken into, but they are now protected. Whatever the police may be in other places, they are a blessing to us."

Mr. Grove is inclined to suspect that the cases of embezzlement are more numerous than what are brought to light. He says,

"There are few charges, but we cannot infer from that circumstance that only a small amount of embezzlement takes place. It is an offence which it is very difficult to prove; and also in regard to the work given out to the weavers, many of the masters protect themselves by levying the amount of their loss off the whole body of his weavers, and the matter is hushed up, and the offender gets off, which is a great evil."

Much information respecting the conduct of the weavers, in regard to property, may be drawn from an account of the best means which have been adopted to protect it.

Of the Societies for Protection against Embezzlement and other Losses.

The most effectual security to the manufacturer against loss, from embezzlement or any other cause, of property entrusted to the weavers, has been effected by societies of the workmen of Mr. Reid, of Mr. Thomas Field Gibson, and of Messrs. Stone & Kemp. The first of these societies was established in 1829; the origin of it is thus described by Mr. Arthur Dear:

"Mr. Reid was vexed at observing some of his men, to whom he had made advances on account of their work, had run away, by which he not only lost his money, but also his goods; and he declared that in future he would not advance any money until the goods were brought home. This would have been a great inconvenience to the men, as they must have bought their articles of

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subsistence at a dearer rate if on credit, and therefore they proposed a plan by which Mr. Reid might be indemnified from loss at all future time in case he made an advance. This led to the formation of the society, and it was framed so as to effect that purpose, and also to make some provision in case of the death of a member, or of a member's wife or child, or of a wife's lying-in."

The workmen are associated into a friendly society; a weaver applying for work is referred to the society, and has to be proposed, and at the end of a week is admitted or refused. The society then becomes security for him, not only in case of embezzlement, but also in case of the goods in his care being stolen, or wilfully cut or damaged. The funds of the society are raised by the manufacturer retaining in his hand 2*d.* in the pound of the wages of his men. The result of the societies has been, that a case of embezzlement is of exceedingly rare occurrence, not above one five-thousandth part of the value of the goods; and the expenditure of the society chiefly arises from the sums given in case of lying-in of the wives of the members, or in case of the death of a wife, a child, or of the member himself.

The money which the manufacturer receives as indemnity for his loss is too small an amount to be of any consideration; but he has the great benefit, that every applicant for work has to pass the ordeal of a body of men who have the means of ascertaining his character, and have an interest in refusing him, if really objectionable. Some of the weavers complain of such societies as a hardship; but it is obvious that a man knows the conditions before applying for work, and the money which he actually has to pay for guaranteeing the manufacturer is too small to be a consideration even to a weaver.

The objections against some other methods of indemnity are much better founded:

"In case of a loss which some manufacturers represent that they have sustained, they will stop a sixpence or a shilling a loom to make good the loss. The men feel this to be a great oppression. The man said to occasion the loss has been employed without their concurrence; they never approved of him, or recommended him; they do not know what may have been lost, or how much may be stopped to make it good. Hence they feel oppressed, and only submit on account of the slackness of work, and the dread of being discharged in case they refused.

"Some manufacturers have even collected 6*d.* a loom all round, as a fund in case there should afterwards be a loss; and when they said a loss had taken place, they would again collect 6*d.* a loom to form a further fund."

One of the rules in all the three societies of this description is worthy of notice. It is, that the manufacturers shall pay the same price to all weavers employed on the same work. This rule is further guarded, that should any member offer to take work at a lower price than that received by other members, the said member shall be excluded.

The great object is to produce one uniform price for work to all alike, and to prevent not only any weaver from taking less, but also any weaver from getting more than the rest.

Such is uniformly the feeling of workmen in all branches of trade. The men who are conscious of their own superiority are discontented. Mr. Joseph Poyton says, "The masters make no difference between a good workman and another. Before the repeal of the Spitalfields Act, the masters were accustomed to say that they could not reward a good man; but since the repeal of the Act we have never seen them find out any good men. If we were to judge from their conduct, there are none of us good, for they never give a farthing to one more than to another."

The fact is, that if inclined to do so, the masters dread the inconvenience of the jealousy which would be occasioned.

STATE OF EDUCATION.

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The attention of the Assistant Commissioners is especially called in their instructions to the state of education.

As to the amount of education in the parish of Bethnal Green, a most respectable Society, of which Mr. Thomas Fowell Buxton is President, has so fully investigated the subject, that the best account that can be given is an extract from their Report:—

"Bethnal Green, containing the greatest number of weavers, great pains have been taken to ascertain the state of education in that parish; and the committee give the result of their inquiries, not only as a statement of the means of education in Bethnal Green, but also because it will afford some proof of the great deficiency which exists throughout the whole district.

"By the census of 1831, as returned to Parliament, the population of Bethnal Green amounted to 62,018 persons. It is probable that the number is now greater; but they assume it to be still 62,000. The first object of the committee was, to ascertain how many of these were children of an age capable of receiving common school education. To come at this fact, two persons were employed, upon whose respectability and accuracy they could rely. They were furnished with suitable books, appointed to certain districts, and instructed to inquire from house to house the number of persons contained in each family, with their respective ages. They visited with these inquiries 486 families, containing in all 2,236 individuals, and of these they found that 498 were children between the ages of five and fourteen. If the proportion of children between these ages be the same throughout the parish as it is in that district (and there is every reason to believe that it is a fair sample of the whole), it follows, that of the 62,000 inhabitants of Bethnal Green, 13,800, or in round numbers 14,000, are children between the ages of five and fourteen.

"Having thus ascertained the numbers in this parish who are capable of common school education, the next object was, to obtain, as near as possible, the number of children who actually enjoy daily instruction. For this purpose, a wider survey was made, in which the children only were enumerated. In the several districts visited, there were 1,883 children between the ages of five and fourteen, and of these 665 were reported to be attending daily schools, while 1,218 were destitute of any daily education whatever. Supposing the state of education to be the same throughout the parish, it follows that there are 4,820 children of these ages who are under daily instruction, whilst 9,180 have none.

"This calculation, however, greatly exaggerates the amount of education in the parish. In this neighbourhood, where the women as well as the men are employed in the manufacture of silk, many children are sent to small schools, not for instruction, but to be taken care of whilst their mothers are at work. In the districts visited, there were found 15 of these 'dame schools,' containing 262 scholars. The instruction imparted at these places varies; but we have no hesitation in saying, that it is far below the standard to which such a city as London should aspire. If, therefore, from the 665 children who were said to attend daily schools we deduct the 262 who have the education of dames' schools only, we shall find that no more than 403, or little more than one in five, are receiving efficient daily instruction. From this calculation it would appear, that of the 14,000 childred of these ages contained in Bethnal Green, there are less than 3,000 who are properly instructed.

"To prove the accuracy of this statement, inquiries have been made as to the various schools at present existing in the parish, and after a most careful investigation, which has been made by some gentlemen residing in the parish, assisted by one of the officers of the British and Foreign School Society, they can find no more than eight schools in Bethnal Green of a public character. The following are their names, with the numbers in attendance, in the month of February 1838:—

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"Bethnal Green National School - - - -	Boys 457 Girls 214
"Bethnal Green Charity School - - - -	Boys 60 Girls 60
"Bethnal Green Chapel Charity School - - -	Girls 12
"Lady Parmiter's Charity School - - - -	Boys 60
"Episcopal Jews' School (for Jewish children only) -	Boys 43 Girls 26
"Abbey-place, Wilmot-square - - - - -	Boys 103
"Hackney-road - - - - - - -	Boys 326
"Twig Folly (Bonner-street) - - - - -	Boys 154
Total - - -	1,516

To these may be added some private schools connected with charities, which may contain 200, or at the utmost 300, scholars, so that, after making ample allowance for non-attendance, &c., the calculation that 3,000 children are instructed, appears to be above rather than below the truth. This statement, appalling as it is, is fully borne out by other authorized statements of the amount of education in this parish. In a paper lately published by the British and Foreign School Society, it is declared, that in Bethnal Green, 'not above 2,000 children enjoy the advantage of daily instruction, leaving 10,000 to wander during the week in ignorance and sin.' By the Report on Education presented to Parliament in 1833, it appears that the daily schools in the parish of Bethnal Green contain in all 1858 scholars: this would leave about 12,000 uneducated.

"The committee believe, therefore, that, after making allowance for such as must at all times be prevented from attending school, there are at this moment from 8,000 to 10,000 children, in Bethnal Green alone, not only without daily instruction, but for whom no means of daily instruction are provided."

Mr. James Miller, under whose direction the men who collected the information were employed, has given evidence to prove the means taken to obtain a most strictly accurate account.

As to Christ Church, Spitalfields, the amount of education is as deficient as in Bethnal Green. I have not been able, after multiplied inquiries, to find so much as one school of any description, which was carried on by any schoolmaster on his own account. I have not found even a dame school for boys or for girls. The schools, therefore, in the parish are, in some degree, of a public nature.

There are the following: Parochial school near the church; the Dissenters' school in Wood-street; National school in Quaker-street; a school for Girls in Grey Eagle-street; Infant school in Quaker-street; Jews school in Bell-lane for children of the Isrelitish nation.

The number of schools in Christ Church and Bethnal Green, Mr. Miller considers quite inadequate to the number of children which the parents wish to send to be instructed. In answer to the observation made to him, that the schools which have been established, have not nerly the number for which they were intended, he says, "Some of the buildings might contain more, but in most cases the teachers could not teach more. We have schools in the district professing to admit for instruction 800 to 1,000 children, with no more than two teachers, a male and a female, and in one school the master told me that he had had 700 boys under his care at one time. I think it no wonder that these schools are not filled; indeed, the wonder is, that 700 children could ever be induced to attend; for I consider that it is beyond the powers of any teacher, be his talents what they may, to bring forward 700 boys, so that they shall generally make such progress as to maintain the character of the school, and induce a full attendance. We do not want two or three large, unwieldly schools for a district, but schools of moderate size, scattered over it, with teachers duly qualified to conduct them."

In regard to the number of children to be taught in one school, Mr. Henry Althans, Inspector of British Schools in and about London, whose experience entitles

entitles his opinion to very great weight, states, that he considers 250 the best number. In this opinion Mr. Penry, of the British School in the Hackney-road, concurs. A less number could not yield a sufficient supply of good monitors. If one master have a larger number to superintend, his time is occupied in preserving order, and in the performance of other duties, and cannot be devoted to instruction. But we cannot expect masters to be very forward in perceiving this, or stating it, whilst their support is dependent on the number of their scholars, and it is highly disinterested in any man who will avow the truth.

The view of the subject entertained by Mr. Miller will not remove the impression that the parents too generally are indifferent to education.

Although the education now attainable be inferior to what is to be wished, yet it is infinitely better than none; and a conscientious parent would be glad to accept it for his children, rather than that they should have none.

Before making any further general remarks on education, I shall attempt to give an account of each important description of school in the district; namely,

The Parochial school of Christ Church, Spitalfields.
The National schools in Christ Church and in Bethnal-green.
The Protestant Dissenters' school, in Wood-street, Christ Church.
The British school in the Hackney-road.
The Infant school.
The Sunday schools.
The Dame schools.
Schools for Females.
Industrial schools.
The Jewish schools.

To this account I shall annex some observations and recommendations respecting schools generally.

Of the Parochial School of Christ Church, Spitalfields.

This school has existed since 1708, being 21 years more than the parochial church. It is intended for 60 boys and 60 girls, and is supported partly by endowments and partly by voluntary contribution. There is a master, who teaches the boys reading, writing, arithmetic, and the church catechism; he also teaches the girls writing. The school-mistress teaches the girls reading and the Catechism, and besides that, needle-work. The boys are admitted at from eight to ten, and may remain till 14. It is never the case that a boy when admitted is found to have received previously any instruction whatever, except sometimes when one comes from the National school. Not one-half of the boys remain till 14, if any situation can be got for them, and fewer of the girls remain than of the boys; this is attributable to the poverty of their parents, and the necessity which they feel of being relieved from the expense of maintaining their children as soon as possible.

The boys and girls receive clothing, as well as instruction. The dress is a charity uniform, rendered still more conspicuous in the case of the boys, by a pewter badge.

This school is under the direction of a committee of the subscribers. There is a general meeting at Christmas, and on that occasion the writing-books of the children are laid on the table. There is no other examination, except that a child when about to leave shool reads in presence of the committee. No doubt confidence is reposed in the master, and in this case justly; but it may be stated of this and of almost every other school, the condition of which has been inquired into, that beyond contributing their money, the subscribers apparently take little interest. There is no public examination. The hands of the masters are not strengthened. The consequence and importance of the schools are not maintained in the eyes of the pupils and parents; zeal and industry are not upheld by the reward of honour and praise. A very conscientious man, under these discouragements,

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couragements, will do his duty; but human nature is feeble, and wants every aid which can be given to it to maintain its activity.

The education of this school is as follows:—

The children learn to read and spell. They use cards on which spelling-lessons are printed; also Trimmer's Abridgement, and the Holy Bible. No other book except the Holy Bible is allowed to be read in school, however long the boys may remain.

The boys who remain a sufficiently long time learn to write a very tolerable hand and they also learn arithmetic, as far as the rules of Practice.

The religious instruction given to the children is the daily reading of the Scriptures as a school-book, the learning to repeat the church Catechism, of which the master gives explanation; and the children also attend religious worship at all times when the church is open for divine service. The Rev. William Stone, the Rector, has, by his own personal exertion, taught the children psalmody, and their performance in Church is very gratifying to the congregation.

The education given in this school, as far as it is allowed to be carried, is excellent, but it is much less extensive than that which the children are capable of receiving, and which might materially be useful to them in future life. The master is not answerable for this, as he must conform to his instructions, and in his answers he evinced his own willingness to give further instruction if it should be required of him. The following quotation from the evidence of Mr. Williams will show what it is intended to convey:—

> "Do you think that it would be advantageous to use some other books in reading, in addition to the Bible?—I think that for the last year or two books in history, geography and natural history, suitable to their years, might occasionally be employed to advantage, and lay a foundation of knowledge which would enlarge their minds, and be exceedingly useful in after life, and, by giving employment to their minds in their leisure hours, tend to abstract them from the unfortunate propensity too often prevalent of frequenting public-houses.
>
> "Do you think that it would be advantageous if maps were suspended on the walls, and geography rather more systematically taught than merely by occasional reading?—I think it would.
>
> "Do you think that the boys might also be advantageously taught the use of the scale and compass, and the construction of the simpler geometrical figures?—In many descriptions of work to which many of the boys go to be employed, such accomplishment would be of daily service.
>
> "Do you think that a small library of books, suitable to their years, would be serviceable to the boys; and do you suppose that they would like to read them?—I think it would be very serviceable to the boys; and, from what I know of them, I have not the least doubt that they would take great pleasure in reading them. The books of course must be of a cheap description; and care must be taken by the master to see that they are not lost. The best boys in the school are those who are most fond of reading. I think the boys ought to be allowed to take books home to read in their leisure hours."

Of the National School.

The National school in Quaker-street was established in 1818, and was said to be for 1,000 children, 600 boys and 400 girls. It is obvious, however, from a view of the two rooms, that if so large a number were congregated, the accommodation would be exceedingly small. The number of boys on the books in summer is about 360, of whom about 320 may be the average attendance; and in winter the number on the books is about 320, of whom about 250 may be the average attendance. The diminution in winter arises from the poverty of the parents, and the difficulty of providing at all times necessary clothing and shoes. The pupils pay 1*d.* a week. The hours of attendance are from nine to twelve in the morning, and two to five between Lady-day and Michaelmas, and two to four between Michaelmas and Lady-day.

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One master and 19 monitors conduct the tuition. The scholars are divided into nine classes, and for each class there are two monitors, called the teacher and his assistant, and over the whole is one general monitor, called the usher. The monitors pay 1*d.* a week, as well as the other pupils, but they receive pay for their services, the usher 8*d.* a week, the teachers 4*d.* a week, and the assistants 2*d.* a week. The monitors are selected and promoted as follows:—

"They are taken from the upper class, and have therefore gone through all the branches taught in the school. When a boy is first put to teach, he is placed as the assistant in the class No. 9, and gradually advances from time to time as vacancies occur through the classes, until he becomes assistant to the first class, after which he is eligible to become teacher to class No. 9, and may be gradually advanced until he become the teacher of class No. 1, after which, if a vacancy in the office of usher take place, the teacher of class No. 1 is promoted to it. This is the rule of promotion generally observed, but extraordinary circumstances may occasionally cause a deviation. A lad exceedingly meritorious may be advanced over the heads of some before him, and it may occur, but it is seldom, that a teacher or assistant is put back a little."

The payment to the monitors acts beneficially, as it gives the master additional power over them, and is an inducement for the boys to aim at the office, but it is quite insufficient to induce the parents to continue the boys after they can get employment for them. They seldom hold office above from six to nine months. The frequent change of monitors Mr. Thomas Aishton, the master, considers beneficial, as the boys enter with zeal on their duties, and the novelty has not time to wear off.

"In some cases, where a monitor has been put into office at a very early age, as eight years, he may continue some years. We have now some in the school who have held office for two or three years, and the head monitor or usher has been in office four years."

The branches of education of the school are reading, writing, arithmetic and religious instruction. The books read are as follows:

"In the youngest class, No. 9, the pupils read an alphabet and easy lessons: in class No. 8 they read easy lessons, monosyllables of three or four letters: in class No. 7, easy lessons with monosyllables of many letters, selected from the Psalms: in No. 6, they read selections from the Scriptures, the Parables of our Saviour: in No. 5, selections from the Scriptures, as history of the Saviour, his miracles, discourses, and Sermon on the Mount: in No. 4, selections from the Old and New Testament: in No. 3, Mrs. Trimmer's Abridgment of the New Testament: in No. 2, the whole New Testament, and occasionally little works, as the evidence of prophecy, the testimony of the prophets: in No. 1, or the highest class, the Bible, being the whole of the Old and New Testament."

Writing is taught to the three senior classes by writing on copy-books; the other classes write on slates.

The extent to which the pupils of the first, or highest, class are taught arithmetic, is thus stated:

"Some of them are not beyond Compound Multiplication and Division; but many others have acquired a knowledge of Reduction and the Rule of Three, and some have gone through the whole of Walkingham's Tutor's Assistant. All of them would be carried to this extent, were it not that they are taken away at too early an age by their parents."

As to religious instruction, the whole of the reading may be so considered; and the pupils learn the church Catechism, and a book called Faith and Duty. They are also taught psalmody.

Many of the pupils come to school as early as six years of age; but some come as late as 9, 10 and 11. The boys who come at that age are scarcely ever found to have previously learned any thing whatever. Few remain at school after 11 or 12. The boys attend the church.

In the girls' school the system is precisely the same as in the boys' school, except that, in addition, needlework is taught.

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This school appears to be exceedingly well conducted by Mr. Aishton, according to the system prescribed to him; but it is to be deplored that the system does not extend further, so as to enable him to do all the good within his power.

In the course of inquiry into the state of this school, there was much occasion to remark the extreme indifference to education on the part of the great bulk of the people. This is the only day-school open to them in the whole parish, yet only from 320 to 360 pupils are on the book. There was also much cause to remark the very limited system of instruction. Some boys of talent and perseverance have gone through the whole curriculum by the age of eight, and have been at that age promoted to the rank of monitors; yet the school is intended for boys until they shall have passed to the age of 12. If a boy remain five or six years, it is obvious that a more extended course of education is required for the higher classes. The master has his hands tied: he is not left at liberty to teach what he can, but must not pass beyond the exceedingly narrow limit laid down by the committee. What he is allowed to do, he does well; and it is to be hoped that, before long, he will be allowed to do more.

National School, Bethnal Green.

This school so much resembles that of Quaker-street, in Christ Church parish, that no particular remark need be made concerning it.

Of the Protestant Dissenters' School in Wood-street, Spitalfields.

This school was established in 1717. Dr. Isaac Watts was a member of the first committee. It is very much a counterpart of the parochial school, with this difference, that the children, instead of the church Catechism, learn the Assembly's Catechism, omitting the question and answer about baptism; and, instead of attending Divine service in the church, they go to certain dissenting chapels in the neighbourhood. Until lately, they sometimes attended the Unitarian chapel in Worship-street, but a majority of the committee have lately decided that the children should not do so.

Clothing is given, as far as the funds will admit, to a certain number of the children, and the clothing is a charity uniform.

It is painful to see how pride and insult have entered into the human heart, and that the very men who are endeavouring to do good, should so wickedly subvert their own work.

The children in this school and the parochial school are not educated or clothed from the poor's-rate, but from endowments and private benevolence: still they must be made to wear the badge of pauperism. Along with the limited education which they receive, they must be imbued from infancy with a sense of base subjection, and be fitted to become, without any reluctant struggle, paupers and inmates of the workhouse at a future day. It is to be lamented that the framers of the Poor Law Amendment Act did not order the badge of pauperism to be taken off every pauper child in England. It is in vain to expect in grown persons a sense of high-minded independence, if the educated portions, those whose superior knowledge is to enable them to guide the rest, shall have their minds familiarized with pauperism and humiliation in their youth.

The course of education is of the same extent with that in the parochial school, and is capable therefore of the same degree of enlargement.

Of the British School, behind the Middlesex Chapel, Hackney Road.

This school is mentioned by Mr. Henry Althans, Inspector of the British Schools in and about London, as a very favourable sample of the British system. In May last, the number of pupils on the books was 306, of whom about 250 usually were present. The pupils pay 2*d.* a-week, and those who write in copy-books pay 3*d.* a week. The pupils also pay for their own paper, but all other things are included in the weekly payment.

The pupils are divided into eight classes, and some of these are subdivided into two divisions, and others into three divisions, altogether into 21 divisions, for each of which there is a monitor, and there is one general or superintending monitor

monitor over the whole. The monitors are not paid, but the master occasionally gives them gratuities, as pencils, paper and such like. The monitors are in general taken from boys of from eight to nine. They receive instruction "from twelve to one after the school is dismissed. The monitors are by this enabled to keep a-head of the pupils. The monitors do not remain in office above a month at a time. They remain so long, in order that they may take an interest and pride in the progress of their classes, and they do not remain so long as to lose their original zeal for their work, which would be the case after a time. When the monitors go out of office, they return to the eighth class, or are advanced as monitors of other classes."

The instruction given to the eight classes is as follows :—

"1st class.—Alphabet.

"2d class.—Spelling words of three letters, and reading easy lessons selected from Scripture.

"3d class.—Spelling words of four letters, and reading selections from the Scriptures.

"4th class.—Spelling words of five or six letters, and reading selections from the Scriptures, writing on slates, while the remaining classes write in books, and cipher.

"5th class.—Spelling words of two syllables, and reading selections from the Scriptures, writing in books, ciphering and geography.

"6th class.—Spelling words of three syllables, and reading selections from the Scriptures of words of not more than three syllables, writing in books, ciphering and geography.

"7th class.—Spelling words of four syllables and upwards, reading Scripture lessons, writing in books, ciphering and geography.

"8th class.—Reading scriptural lessons and the History of England, English grammar and geography. One day in the week an hour is devoted to recitation of English poetry. Many of the pupils, whose parents wish it, have books in which they enter the sums in arithmetic. They are taught in arithmetic, as far as their time will allow. Many of them go through the Tutor. Twice a week, an hour each time the pupils are taught the elementary principles of mechanics. A certain number remain in the school an hour each time, and learn the elements of drawing and perspective."

The children are not taught any Catechism, the diversity of religious opinions rendering this impossible. They do not assemble on Sundays to go to a place of worship; but every parent is informed, that it is expected that his child, if admitted to the school, shall attend some place of worship. It is said, that the parents faithfully observe this obligation, although so few of themselves attend public worship; and it is not unlikely, as few parents object to attendance on the part of their families, however negligent of this religious duty themselves.

In respect of musical education, Mr. Penry, the master, states, "they learn to sing hymn tunes, and pieces of music from a work by Mr. Hickson. To these tunes the children sing pieces of poetry. We do not consider it consistent with the reverence due to religious worship to make the children sing psalms and hymns whilst learning to sing, or whilst singing merely to promote hilarity and cheerfulness of mind. The children usually sing before leaving school, and it is exceedingly pleasing to hear them."

Mr. Penry also gives the following evidence of what he considers ought to be done to inspire the children with a desire of knowledge :—

"Sometimes the children are taken out into the fields, and an endeavour is made to give them some idea of the structure of plants. The children have been to the British Museum; and more than once a friend of the school has made a present of an order for the admission of 50 children to the Surrey Zoological Gardens. It would tend much to enlarge the minds of children, if the privilege of admission to St. Paul's, to the Monument, and other public places, was, on certain days, to be granted to schools. It would be doing a great good at no expense."

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Mr. Penry gives the following evidence:—

"Do any of the children acquire a taste of reading?—Many of them do so; and we have a school library, from which they are allowed to have books to take home. The books consist of travels, biography, geography and elementary works of science.

"Do you consider that a knowledge of the elements of geometry, and the use of scale and compass, would be advantageous to the pupils?—No doubt of it. At the same time we are limited, by the poverty of our funds, and also by the shortness of the time that the boys remain at the school, which does not average above three years. All that was taught at first in the British school, originating with Mr. Lancaster, was reading, writing and the first four rules of arithmetic. The same was the case at first also with the national schools first established by Dr. Bell. The national schools in general still adhere to what they did at first; but in the British schools we have carried instruction farther in arithmetic, and besides, we have taught grammar, geography, and other useful branches of learning; and I am of opinion, that instruction will be carried still much further, when the parents of the children have learned more to know the value of education, and will allow the children to remain longer at school. One thing is agreeable to observe, and that is, the more intelligent and instructed a parent himself is, the more he is desirous that his children shall remain at school sufficiently long to be instructed."

The friends of the National Schools will do well to read the above evidence of Mr. Penry. There can be no good reason why a National school should be in any respect inferior to a British school in the instruction given to the pupils.

Mr. Henry Althans, in reply to a question, "What branches of education are taught in the schools on the British and Foreign system?" says—

"Reading, writing, arithmetic (both slate and mental), grammar, geography, elements of geometry, use of scale and compass on the slate and on boards, also portions of natural history, and of civil history; but I ought to state, that our system does not set a limit to the branches to be taught. With our Society the master's abilities and acquirements are the only limits, unless restricted by a narrow-minded local committee, which is done is some cases."

There is no good reason why, in any schools, there should be any other limits to instruction but the master's abilities and acquirements.

With the present very limited means of preparatory instruction of the masters, the system of education must necessarily be too often limited by the master's acquirements, both in the National and British schools; but it is to be hoped that both Societies will be enabled to improve in this respect, and give a larger course of education to their masters, and that extended knowledge will prevent all "narrow-minded committees" in future from narrowing the course of useful instruction, and that the philanthropist will see both Societies continuing a useful emulation in their benevolent career.

The masters of the British schools usually have as their salaries what the schools produce, and the amount, according to Mr. Althans, may be said in general to be from 50*l.* to 80*l.* per annum. The incomes of the schoolmistresses are from 40*l.* to 60*l.*

Of the Infant School.

The Infant school in Quaker-street was established and is in a great degree supported by the benevolence of Mr. Joseph Wilson. It is intended for 150 children, and about that number attend in summer, and 112 in winter. The pupils pay a penny a week. This school has a considerable degree of celebrity, and is looked upon as a model. A visit to it is very gratifying. The children appear exceedingly happy; they are kept out of harm's way; they pass their time agreeably, acquire habits of cleanliness and good order, cultivate kindly affections towards each other, and learn probably as much as can be expected from their very youthful years.

Mr.

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Mr. Brown gives the following account of the proceedings of the school:—

"When they first come in the morning, there are prayers and singing, and then a spelling lesson, which will take up about 40 minutes; after which, they march out to the play-ground two and two, singing 'We are all marching, marching, marching, marching,' to a lively tune. They remain in the play-ground 20 minutes; a bell is then rung, and they return into the room. Then we make them go through an arithmetical table in verse, as long measure, and such like. Then they go to reading lessons in classes, which will take half an hour. Then they march out and play half an hour; after which, they re-enter the school, and take their seats in the gallery, or in cold weather round the fire, and take lessons, of which there is a different one every day in the week, which will occupy to 20 minutes to 12; after which, they all sing a verse of a hymn, and are dismissed.

"Do all go home?—Some bring their dinners, and remain in the school-room, or in the play-ground, at their own pleasure, until two o'clock, when the school again assemble.

"What do the children in the afternoon?—They first sing a verse when they come in; then the greater boys and girls have slates, that is, to the number of about 40. They are arranged in a line before a large slate, and the master writes on the slate, and the pupils write after him. When they have written a word, they pass before the master, who observes what each has done, and rubs out what has been written. They take their line again, and the master writes another word, and so for half an hour. The smaller children see what is done, although they do not have slates. After this, the pupils have a spelling lesson by dictation, that is, a child stands out, spells a word, and then another word, and so on, as long as he can think of a word; after which, another child stands out, and spells as long as his or her memory can find words: this is continued about a quarter of an hour. Then the children march out to play to the sound of the violin; half an hour after, they return, and read in classes. Then they go into the gallery again, and take lessons, as in the morning, only on different subjects; and in winter this occupies the afternoon. In summer they go out to play, and return and take another exercise in the gallery. We endeavour to turn every lesson (whatever may be the subject) to practical account. This is our invariable custom, and indeed forms an integral part of our system. After this, they sing, repeat a prayer, and then go home."

The singing, the violin, the marching, the play, the play-ground, noticed by Mr. Brown, are all most excellent things, as is also the large and spacious school-room. The children seem exceedingly happy and animated. In some infant schools there is a large number of children in a small room, packed together like herrings in a cask, with a cross-tempered, ignorant, surly tyrant to keep them in terror. Such infant schools are a nuisance. The school in Quaker-street is the reverse, and cannot be too much commended.

Of the Sunday Schools.

Mr. Henry Althans, Inspector of the British Schools, has supplied the following list of the Sunday Schools in the district in which our inquiry has been made:—

	Teachers.	Scholars.
SPITALFIELDS DISTRICT.		
Spitalfields chapel	41	391
Artillery-street	14	90
White-row	39	310
BETHNAL GREEN DISTRICT.		
Friars Mount (no return, about)	20	400
Gibraltar chapel	43	597
Bethnal-green workhouse	7	170
Middlesex chapel	14	204
Virginia chapel	21	244

 (*continued.*)

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BETHNAL GREEN DISTRICT.—*continued.*	Teachers.	Scholars.
Hope-street	17	164
Collingwood-street	10	150
St. John-street	34	450
Hare-street	20	250
Immanuel chapel, Hare-street	23	250
Tent-street	13	133
Bethnal-green meeting	28	350
United Poor Child's, and Abbey	30	300
New York-street	15	67
Ebenezer, Bethnal-green	14	80
Pollard's-row	17	125
Hope-town	11	64
Zion Chapel, George-gardens	8	78
SCHOOLS connected with the Established Church:		
Sir George Wheeler's chapel, Spital-square	20	200
St. John's church, Bethnal-green	10	100
TOTAL	469	5,167

The teachers of the Sunday schools all serve gratuitously; some who undertake to teach, soon tire, and discontinue; but those who hold out over the first difficulties, are found, one with another, to continue about seven years. In every school is a superintendent, so that the system is much like that of a master and ushers. In the Sunday school in Virginia Chapel, Virginia-row, Shoreditch, which Mr. Althans has for many years superintended, the following is the course of instruction.:—

"There are five classes.

"The first class is of children who are taught the letters and monosyllables.

"The second class is of children who read words of two syllables.

"The third class read words of three syllables, and upwards.

"The fourth class read the Testament.

"The fifth class read the Bible.

"In each class the children are interrogated on what they read."

The time of attendance is before Divine service in the morning and in the afternoon. The children are altogether about four hours in school, of which, three hours are spent in teaching; the rest of the time in singing, prayer and listening to an address.

The beneficial effects of Sunday schools Mr. Althans thus describes:—

"In about two years the boys and girls learn to read; but the Sunday schools must be regarded not so much as literary, as moral and religious institutions, and as producing a great moral effect on the minds of the population. All the books and all the lessons have a religious tendency. Many of the best teachers in the Sunday schools have been educated there, and from the Sunday schools come many of the best teachers to the British and Foreign schools."

Mr. Althans considers that the number of children attending Sunday schools is not above one half what might be expected from the population of the district. There is not, however, any dislike of parents in general to send their children to the Sunday schools. The Rev. Dr. Sturtevant, who feels strongly the indifference of the people to religion, commends them for sending the children to Sunday schools, and considers it as a source of hope for the district in years to come.

Of the DAME SCHOOLS.

Mr. Henry Althans, Inspector of the British Schools, says of them, "They are in general good for nothing. A broken-down mechanic's wife, fit for nothing but the wash-tub, or perhaps as a last resource to keep her from the poor-house, sets up a dame school, and gets a few children about her, who learn scarcely any thing. In the parish of Bethnal-green are 14 dame schools, having amongst them 252 scholars. One of these, having 35 scholars, is an exception to the general observation which I have made."

Mr.

Mr. Miller places the dame schools in a somewhat more favourable point of view. He says that "they are little better than nurseries to take care of the children whilst their mothers are at work." Perhaps this is the most that can be said for them, and the children ought not to be enumerated amongst those receiving education.

Schools for Females.

As to the education given to females, the returns collected respecting the schools, and the evidence of all the persons who have been examined on the subject, prove that it is of much less amount than that given to boys. The number of girls attending the schools is seldom one-half the number of boys. This is the case also in the Jews' school in Bell-lane. It is so in the country towns. Girls at a very early age can be rendered useful in taking care of the younger children, and performing household work, and hence there is a great temptation to keep them at home to assist their mothers. They also more readily get situations. The weavers' daughters are likewise set to wind quills. From these causes, unfortunately, girls receive much less scholastic instruction than the boys, and a still less proportion of the girls is sent to school at all.

The evidence of the schoolmistresses who have been examined, proves that the daughters of the weavers who have come to school even some years later in life than is usual, have not previously acquired any knowledge of needlework; and, with the exception of the small proportion of girls who have gone to school, there is no reason to believe that any part of the female population amongst the weavers know any thing of the needle whatever.

Evidence to any amount might have been taken, that the daughters of weavers were unacquainted with cooking, and other work understood by accomplished servants. It is abundantly obvious that they have no means of obtaining a knowledge of any thing more than what is practised in the humble habitations of their own parents.

On these defects many matrons are disposed to animadvert with great severity; and certainly a weaver's daughter is not qualified for a respectable situation as a domestic servant, and if she obtain a husband in good circumstances, she has many things to learn; but her main chance in life is to obtain a weaver, and he is disposed to consider the earnings which she can make at the loom as far more advantageous to him than all that she could gain or save by the use of the needle, or could benefit him by cooking dinners which his wages do not enable him to buy.

Venerable matrons and spinsters are also disposed to view with much displeasure the bonnets with showy ribbons, the ear-drops, the red coral necklaces of four or five strings, the bracelets, and other finery in which the weaver's daughter appears on Easter Monday at Greenwich fair; and the same parties bestow especial indignation on the unbecoming forwardness with which, at eighteen, or even at an earlier age, she dares to become a wife; but with all due respect to such virtuous condemnation, we must hesitate in expressing assent. The ornaments which are derided, may be deficient in good taste, but it is obvious, from result, that they produce the effect intended; and as to the age of marriage, however we may condemn as unwise all premature engagements on the part of men, it is too much to expect calculating prudence and philosophic restraint on the part of women, and they must be excused for marrying when they can. To the honour of the young women of Bethnal Green, it has been given in evidence, not to be disputed, that there is not one female walking the streets of that district seeking to gain a disgraceful livelihood by the practice of vice.

Of Industrial Schools.

The Assistant Commissioners are instructed to "notice particularly such industrial schools as may tend to fit the children for any other, and what employments." Within the district of Spitalfields there is no industrial school. A short way beyond the district, in Gower's Walk, a street on the south side of Whitechapel church, is an industrial school, which is considered as a superior sample of such institutions, in which the boys, in addition to the usual education, are taught printing. It was established by a benevolent individual, Mr. Davies, who gave the extensive building in which the school is carried on, and further endowed it with £.2,000 Three per Cent. Consols. With these two most important helps, the school has paid all its expenses, and has been very successful. It is unnecessary

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to enter into farther particulars, as this school is described in a most accessible publication, Chambers's Journal, No. 229.

Notwithstanding the seeming utility of such institutions, it is perhaps a matter of congratulation, rather than otherwise, that none of them exist in Spitalfields. Exercises of industry, which are to teach boys convenient accomplishments, may be useful; but a trade is another affair, and can be taught no where so well as in the workshop, and under a master who has a deep interest that every thing that is done, shall be done in the best manner.

The apparent benefit of an industrial school is, that the boys at 14 years of age more readily get apprenticed, and so far it may be beneficial to the individuals concerned; but it is perfectly certain that, in all trades for the work of which there is a demand, apprentices would be sought for, without any premium of previous industrial education; and if such education be given at an expense defrayed by public taxation or private benevolence, it is operating to the prejudice of other children who have not received such charitable aid, and there is no benefit conferred on society at large.

But it is taking much too favourable a view of the case, to assume that the children educated to some knowledge of a trade in industrial schools, do always obtain thereby beneficial apprenticeships under good masters. It is very often otherwise, and many good masters refuse to receive them, preferring boys entirely untaught. At the time when they are to leave school, it occurs that low, indifferent masters find them out, and tempt them and their parents, by an offer of such wages as 4*s.* or 5*s.* a week, to come into their service. The boys continue three or four years, until they find that they cannot obtain wages adequate to their wants, and leave. They then discover, to their sad discomfiture, that they have not been properly taught their trade; that the years which should have been bestowed in acquiring a proficient knowledge of it, have been wasted under men who could not teach them, and had not such a trade as to be able to put before them a good description of work. They feel it too late to begin to learn, and besides, they are little disposed to it, and are already confirmed in bad habits of workmanship. They are not fit to go into good shops, and, besides this, regularly taught men will not allow them to work along with them. Thus the industrial education proves the ruin, instead of the benefit of the children.

For these reasons, it appears that industrial schools ought not to be recommended to the support of public taxation or of private benevolence.

Of the Jewish Schools.

Every information respecting the institutions amongst the descendents of the signally distinguished ancient nation of Israel, cannot fail to be interesting, more particularly to those who are anxiously looking forward to what may be the future destiny of that people. It is most satisfactory to find that the greatest efforts are made by the more opulent to afford to their poorer brethren the means of education, both civil and religious, and also that means are taken to teach the boys industrious trades by which they may be withdrawn from buying and selling about the streets, and may become more useful members of society. Physically the Jews are very strong; they love good eating, but are very moderate as to drink.

There is no attempt to maintain a "middle wall of partition" between the Jews and the rest of the native-born subjects of the Crown. In the schools use is made of the authorized version of the Bible, of Mrs. Trimmer's selections, and of school-books commonly found in other schools.

It is satisfactory to add, that every institution connected with the Jews has been most readily thrown open to inquiry, and every information unreservedly communicated.

Of the Jews' Free School in Bell-lane, Spitalfields.

This school was originally established in 1818, for 270 boys. The committee having found it to answer their expectations, extended their views, and built upon freehold ground a school for 600 boys, 101 feet by 51, and a school for 300 girls, 70 feet by 35; likewise an adjoining class-room for 21 boys, on the foundation, with residences for the master and mistress.

The boys' school was opened on the 20th of January 1820, and the girls' school in the February of the same year.

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At the anniversary on the 29th of March 1838, the number of boys attending the school was 314, and the number of girls 130. The education of the boys comprehends English, Hebrew, writing, arithmetic and religious instruction. The school is every day commenced by repeating the morning prayers, and closed by chanting a Hebrew hymn. The girls are taught the same branches, with the addition of needle-work.

At the anniversary of the boys in the English department, 144 were readin gthe Bible and Mrs. Trimmer's Selections, 101 were in lessons, and 69 in lower classes.

In the Hebrew department 89 boys were translating the prayers and the Bible, 111 were reading the prayers, 60 were reading easy lessons, and 54 were in lower classes.

The boys are taught writing, the usual characters, and also the Hebrew characters in a running-hand considerably different from the printed Hebrew letters.

In arithmetic 40 were found versed in the first four rules, and 74 were learning Addition, Subtraction and the tables.

In the girls' school 25 were reading the Bible, and 36 were reading Mrs. Trimmer's Selections; the remainder were in the lower classes. There were 26 translating Hebrew; and 40 reading the Hebrew prayer-book. In arithmetic, 18 were forward in the first four rules, and 22 were in Addition; the remainder were in tables.

On the Saturdays the children attend and listen to the reading of the Bible in Hebrew and English, and to an explanatory discourse from the master. Adults from the neighbourhood attend on such occasions.

English and Hebrew grammar have lately been added to the course of instruction.

The 21 boys on the foundation have the benefit of further instruction, with a view to binding them as apprentices to trades, and getting them employed as clerks; also to qualify them to fill situations as readers of the synagogue, and teachers.

The committee state that, "From the experience of the course pursued in the school, it is now completely ascertained, that a boy of moderate capacity may be taught to read both Hebrew and English, write tolerably well, and know the first four rules of arithmetic, in about two years."

From the number of boys being only 314, instead of 600, for which the school is intended, and the girls being 130, instead of 300, it is evident that education is not sufficiently valued by many of the working classes of the Hebrew nation. The master, Mr. Henry, states, however, that the young men who twenty years ago were scholars at this school themselves, are very desirous that their children should enjoy the benefit of a good education, which is a circumstance that promises well for the future.

The poverty of the parents is one cause of the small number of girls, there being a great temptation to remove them from school to employ them in domestic labours.

The children pay 1*d.* a week.

The system of teaching is nearly the same as that of the British and Foreign School Society, but parts of the Madras system are also adopted.

From the commencement, the children have been clothed by the liberality of an unknown benefactor. Lately it has been discovered that this benevolent person was Mrs. Nathan Meyer de Rothschild.

Before concluding the description of this school, we may observe, that, in addition to the instruction usually given in the National and some of the British schools, the children are taught a dead language grammatically, namely, the ancient Hebrew spoken before the Babylonish captivity, the mental exertion of learning which language cannot fail to improve the faculties.

There are several other branches of knowledge which might advantageously be introduced, for instance, geography. With the help of a few large maps suspended on the walls, it would be easy to teach the whole school a knowledge of the positions of the different countries of the world, to point the course of a vessel to America or the Indies, or any other part of the world, and advantage might be taken of every remarkable event which from time to time might take place in the world, gradually to familiarise the youthful mind with a knowledge of this branch of science.

Some knowledge of the works of nature, and of general history, might also with advantage be communicated.

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Of the Jews' Hospital, Mile End.

This is a very elegant building, perhaps rather too much so for a charitable institution. It is supported by the interest of money given or bequeathed, and by annual subscriptions. Twelve aged persons are maintained, and 43 boys and 15 girls. The boys receive a school education, and, in addition to this, are taught trades. A certain number are employed in making chairs, and in cabinet-work, and another set are taught ladies shoemaking. Some years ago 14 boys were put to silk-weaving, but it will excite no surprise that this part of the scheme has been abandoned.

The young men who have been brought up in this institution are stated to be comfortably settled in life, and to be useful members of society.

As the Jews had much difficulty in finding amongst their own people proficient master tradesmen to whom boys might be apprenticed, the object of this institution to supply such a want cannot be too much praised. In the course of a generation a body of Jewish master tradesmen will be established sufficient to remove the difficulty.

Of the Jews' Orphan Society of the Spanish and Portuguese Jews' Congregation.

This institution dates so far back as 1703 : its objects are, the maintaining, educating and apprenticing fatherless boys, natives of this country, or who may have resided in it at least two years.

The Hebrew teacher instructs the boys in Hebrew, and to translate Hebrew into English, also to chaunt the several prayers correctly, and is to give instruction in Spanish to such boys as shall, by superior talent, assiduity and good behaviour, deserve such encouragement. He also gives religious instruction.

The English teacher instructs in writing, arithmetic, book-keeping, grammar and recitation.

Of the Jews' Charity School, Henage-lane, Bevis Marks.

This is an institution of the Spanish and Portuguese Jews : it is intended for the children of the poor members of the congregation. The children are educated, clothed and apprenticed, but are not maintained, as in the Orphan school. The education given is precisely the same as in that institution.

Of the Shaare Tikva, or Preparatory School.

This school was established in 1830, for poor children of the Spanish and Portuguese congregation generally. The Hebrew, English and religious education are the same as in the other schools. Rewards, consisting of wearing apparel and books, are given to the children who are recommended as meritorious.

Of the Jews' Orphan Asylum.

This establishment commenced under the patronage of Queen Adelaide and the Duchess of Kent, in 1831. The house is in Lemon-street, Goodman's-fields. It is intended for children of the Jewish nation generally, who have lost both parents. At present there are 10 boys and 14 girls. It is intended to bestow a sound moral and religious education, with maintenance and clothing, and to bind the children, on leaving school, to some respectable trade.

It is gratifying to find, in every institution for the education of the Jews, a desire to bring up the children to some useful trade. Buying and selling cheap useful articles in the street is an employment which naturally falls to the weak and destitute ; and a body of men like the Jews, in possession of fine physical condition, do not beneficially employ themselves in such an occupation. It is, besides, exposed to great moral temptation.

It is pleasing to observe the names of many respectable Christians amongst the contributors to the Jewish charities. These have an additional claim from this consideration, that whilst the Jews are bound to contribute to all legal assessments, the indigent amongst them, in consequence of the regulations and ceremonies of their faith, are precluded from deriving any advantage from our institutions for the relief of the poor, and are thrown back on the contributions of the benevolent.

General Observations on Schools.

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1. In all schools, without exception, the Bible is used as a class-book, and, in general, no other book is used for the higher classes. Such is the case, whether the school be supported by endowment, or by voluntary subscription; whether it be National or British, Protestant or Catholic, Christian or Jewish. The same is the case in every other district, as well as in London. It is obvious, therefore, that all attempts to exclude the Bible as a school-book must utterly fail. The men whose benevolence establishes, whose care superintends, whose money supports schools, all concur in requiring the Bible to be read by the pupils as the foundation of religious knowledge. In opposition to such a phalanx no power could stand; and without the aid of such men, no system of education in this country could be carried on.

2. It is of the utmost importance that the public mind should be disabused respecting the number of persons receiving education in this country. From the publicity given to the proceedings of all societies engaged in forwarding education, an impression is created that there is a general diffusion of knowledge, and that the great bulk of the population is receiving education. How untrue this is in the metropolis, the researches here detailed sufficiently show. In some of the large country towns there is a greater amount of education, but far less than the population requires. But it is to be feared, that in the agricultural districts generally there is less education than in London; and England lies under the reproach of being far behind many of the countries on the continent, and containing a mass of uneducated beings far superior in number to the people to whom education is communicated.

3. The public mind ought also to be disabused relative to the nature of the education generally bestowed. The preceding details will show how limited it is, and how far it falls short of what the great body of the people receive in Holland, and in Germany, and in all the provinces of the empire of Austria.

4. There is a most important practical object which may immediately be carried into effect; and that is, a grant may be made to the National School Society, and to the British and Foreign School Society, for the purpose of educating teachers. The Parliament has made a liberal grant to aid in the building of schools, but the supply of fit masters is equally required. The men who are found to become the best teachers, are persons who have never been engaged in teaching before; and three months is all the period which the funds of the two Societies enable to allow for the purpose of instructing the masters, and also in teaching them the art and system of communicating knowledge. This time is clearly inadequate. The last Report of the British and Foreign School Society states,

"Increasingly convinced of the importance of this preparatory training, and satisfied that he who undertakes to teach others, must take time to prepare himself, your committee have constant occasion to regret that so short a period as three months is all that can be allowed for the accomplishment of a work which, if properly undertaken, would require at least two years for its completion. Nothing can be more unreasonable than the expectation that any person previously unacquainted with more than the elements of knowledge, should, in so short a space of time, be fitted for duties which, when rightly performed, require a thorough comprehension of the principles of teaching, as well as a considerable degree of familiarity with its practical details."

It is therefore submitted to the Central Board, that a most liberal grant, as large as Parliament can be induced to vote, for the purpose of educating teachers, ought to be recommended.

5. Nothing, for the present, ought to be done in the way of compulsion: the public mind is not prepared for it. Truth must, therefore, be left to work its own way; and when the public voice demands it, then more may be done. Public discussion may do much; and in time, that may be easy which at present is impracticable, and which it would be injurious to attempt. But when we see the schools provided for the instruction of the children of the poorer classes so inadequately attended, when even the charge of 1*d.* a week has the effect of diminishing the attendance to a very serious amount, it is obvious that a proper

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sense is not felt of the utility of education; and the time must at last come when the duty of educating the rising generation must not be left to the caprice of ignorant or worthless parents, but must be enforced by law. When the public becomes sufficiently enlightened to demand this to be done, it may be granted to them; but it would be impolitic at present.

Of the necessity of bestowing a better education than what is now received by the children of the more industrious of the middle classes, there is a growing conviction; and the Bishops of London and of Winchester, with the clergy and lay gentlemen associated with them, have done themselves immortal honour by their endeavours to establish a model school for the sons of persons in that rank of life, in the expectation that many schools on the same plan may thence originate. Nothing can be more praiseworthy; but let it be remembered, that the middle station is far from being hereditary; that only a small portion of the sons maintain the position of their fathers; that the larger portion of the industrious tradesmen are persons whose self-denial and perseverance have brought them forward; and were we now to take an account of the thriving tradesmen in the metropolis, the larger portion would be found to be men who had raised themselves from the condition of labourers and journeymen.

If, therefore, it be wished that the industrious tradesmen should be an educated body of men, it will be necessary to afford the opportunity of acquiring the foundation to the body of society generally. At school, talent and perseverance will have their effect, and the same individuals who there distinguish themselves will be the persons who will force themselves onward by their good conduct in after-life. Were there good schools for the children of persons in the working classes of society, our tradesmen generally would be very superior to what they are. It becomes the more important that that class of men should be educated, as the political changes which have taken place have given to them a very large share of the election of the legislators of the Empire, and knowledge alone can fit them for the discharge of their duties. They are the persons also who are called upon to sit on common juries; and on their knowledge, in a great degree, depends the sound administration of justice.

Battersea and Wandsworth.

Engine Weavers, Riband Factory at Battersea, and Bolting-Cloth Factory at Wandsworth.

That this Report may not omit any important class of hand-loom weavers, I give an account of the engine weavers, also of the riband weavers at Battersea, and of the bolting-cloth weavers at Wandsworth.

Engine Weavers.

The engine weavers are so called from their weaving with a loom, which, by means of a certain mechanism, can put in motion a great number of small shuttles' at once, and can make accordingly a great number of ribands. Some of the ribands are as narrow even as a fourth part of an inch. The variety of purposes for which the narrow ribands of different breadths are used, is endless, but we may particularise shoe-strings, for binding shoes, boots, for going round hats, for binding the edges of hats, for binding the edges of garments worn by both sexes. In some engine looms 16 pieces are made at a time, in others 20 or 24 pieces, or even as many as 36. The length of a piece is 36 yards.

The trade seems rather more difficult to learn than the plainest fabrics of broad silk. Mr. Leagoe, an engine weaver, was a month before he could get on weaving by himself. He says that a lad may work well at the end of a twelve-month. Mr. Joseph Pillar states, that "the whole art and mystery may be learnt in a year, and a weaver may be quite perfect in two years, although there is always something to learn from changes taking place in the business."

Two calamities seem to have come upon the engine weavers about the same period,—the repeal of the Spitalfields Act, and the introduction of the power-loom

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loom to the weaving of their fabrics in the north. There has, consequently, been a great reduction of wages.

Mr. Charles Leagoe was engaged in making double ribands. Before 1824, he got 1*l.* 8*s.* 4*d.* a week: in 1286 this work was done for 18*s.*, and in 1831, for 15*s.*, and that work is now paid only 13*s.* 4*d.*, and, deducting 1*s.* for extra rent, and 9*d.* for candles, the net earnings of the weaver is about 11*s.* 7*d.* a week. In this branch the weaver must wind his own quills, as a child cannot be trusted.

Of this work there is now but little, and the weavers engaged in it suffer much from "play." The trade is gradually becoming extinct.

Mr. Charles Leagoe has for the last seven years been employed chiefly in making galloons, for which he is paid 7*s.* 6*d.* a length, and, after deducting 1*s.* 9*d.* expenses, his earnings are now 5*s.* 9*d.* a week from the loom. Even at those wages there is often little to do. He goes out attempting to sell tin-ware, during which time his wife takes his place at the loom, and he also attends at the Borough market from 4 to 12 on the Saturday afternoon, and altogether makes 11 *s.* 6*d.* a week for himself and family.

The evidence of Mr. Joseph Pillar, and of Mr. Robert Sellar, as to the state and prospects of the trade, corroborates that of Mr. Leagoe.

Mr. Sellar, on being asked whether the power-loom was not ruining his employment, replies, "That is the case. Nothing can save the trade from total annihilation." Mr. Leagoe being asked if he sees any remedy, replies, "No, I do not. There is no relief but getting out of the trade to something else."

Wretched as the occupation is, it is lamentable to learn from Mr. Sellar, that some parents still bring up their children to it, making the usual excuse of inability to do any thing else. Mr. Leagoe says, "I would not let a child of mine touch the trade. I am convinced that my children could never make a living at it. I should be acting most unjustly to them to bring them up to it." To the honour of this witness, I add, that, on being asked if he ever had aid from the parish, he replied, "I shudder at the idea of parochial aid. I never had any relief, except when we were all laid up by the typhus fever."

Riband Factory at Battersea.

At two visits to this factory, the following account was obtained from the superintendent, Mr. Delaforce.

The factory at Battersea is situate on the Surrey side of the Thames, about half a mile higher up than the bridge. The buildings were erected and the machinery placed in them by Messrs. Ames & Atkinson, with a view to make goods in rivalship of the French. The factory is intended for the whole of the operations of the silk trade. There are weaving-rooms in which were set up 80 à-la-bar looms, moving Jacquards, the cost of each loom, with the necessary tackling, being about 120 guineas.

The speculation proved unfortunate; it is said that 13,000*l.* were lost on the goods manufactured in the space of three years. Mr. Ames soon after died, and it is believed that his death was hastened by vexation of mind. About seven years ago, the premises were sold to Mr. Brunskill, the present proprietor. Of the 80 à-la-bar looms for weaving ribands, only 20 were employed in May 1838. Many of the looms had been taken down, and had been packed into a large room; this was caused by the want of a demand for figured goods. Of the looms at work, there were eighteen used by men, and two by women. The wages of the men were from 15*s.* to 20*s.* a week, from which the expense of candles, say 6*d.* a week take the year all round, and 1*s.* 3*d.* for winding the quills, had to be deducted. The hours of working are from six to nine, from which are to be deducted the time for meals. In summer the superintendent, out of kindness to the men, opened the factory at an earlier hour and they left off when it became dark. A woman might earn about 10*s.* a week.

The operation of putting in motion the à-la-bar loom is very much like that of a man working a fire-engine. It is therefore more healthy than the common hand-loom, as there is no pressure on the stomach: still it is laborious work. Eight pieces of riband were made at the same time. The length of each piece is 36 yards. The whole usually take a fortnight, and the price is 35*s.* for the whole eight pieces. The weaver has to pay the expenses, as already stated. There is

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also a considerable loss to the weaver in preparing the loom on the occasion of changing a pattern, which may perhaps be three weeks. Hence in this, as in all other fancy branches, the weaver is a great loser by frequent changes of the fashion. The ribands worn in the Spring of 1838, were broad ribands, being figured lustrings or lutestrings, by the manufacturers and work-people abbreviated into lutes.

Similar broad ribands had not been made until the Spring of 1838, there not being a demand for them.

But for the introduction of the Jacquard loom, all attempt at meeting the French goods in the market would have been out of the question. A pattern, which is now set up by means of the Jacquard loom in three weeks, by the former method would have taken 18 months; and, besides, it required great skill in the workman to weave it; whereas the Jacquard requires little more skill than weaving plain silk. On one occasion, after Messrs. Ames & Atkinson had got a pattern set up by 18 months' labour, and 300*l.* expense, the whole had to be taken down. The book wages of Spitalfields were found to be higher than the price for which the silk goods were sold in the market could possibly afford.

About eight years ago it was not an uncommon thing for a weaver to earn 3*l.* or 3*l.* 10*s.* a week; now the wages are reduced to about a fourth part of that amount, chiefly through the falling off of business.

The expense of provisions at Battersea is nearly 20 per cent. higher than in London.

Besides preparing the silk for the riband weavers employed on the premises, canes are made up, and sent to be woven in Spitalfields.

There is no water-power nor steam-power employed in the factory. The machinery is put in motion by human power. Hence the factory does not come under the Factory Act.

Mr. Brunskill, the proprietor, states, in a letter dated 14th May 1838, that the average weekly earnings of eight men working at the à-la-bar loom were 13*s.* 4*d.*, subject to a deduction for quill winding. This is the only instance which the Assistant Commissioner has ever met with of a manufacturer stating the wages at less than the statement of his men.

Bolting-Cloth Factory, Wandsworth.

This factory was visited on the 14th of June 1838, when the following account was given by Mr. Henderson, the superintendent, and, as far as regards the wages was confirmed by the men:—

The factory is situate near the church. It is for making bo'ting cloths without seams, to be used for dressing flour. These cloths are a substitute for the wire machines. The proprietors are Messrs. Blackmore. The fabric is made from hard hand-spun woollen yarn of the same sort as is made in Suffolk.

The invention is about fifty years old, and this is the only factory of the kind in the Kingdom. The shuttle is thrown by the hand. There are 19 numbers, of which No. 1 sells for 12*s.*, and the succeeding numbers regularly increase in price to No. 19, which is sold for 1*l.* 18*s.* There are 25 looms employed. The men all work in the factory, the proprietors finding the looms, and making no charge for looms or loom standing. The men work by the piece, and their average earnings are about 25*s.* a week; but out of this they have to pay for candles, as well as the assistance of a boy in some parts of the work, and in winding the quills. The employment is regular throughout the year.

The Assistant Commissioner had only to congratulate the men on their condition being so much more favourable than that of the weavers generally in other fabrics.

WAGES OF WORKMEN IN THE METROPOLIS.

Wages in the Metropolis.

Report of J. Mitchell, Esq. LL.D.

With a view to comparison between the wages of the weavers and of the other classes of workmen, considerable inquiry has been made, and the following are the results:

Carpenters.

Mr. Benjamin Reed, a surveyor in Old Broad-street, states, that the usual wages of the carpenters are 5 *s.* per day from Lady-day to Lord Mayor's day, that is, the 9th of November, and 4 *s.* 9 *d.* a day the rest of the year. A carpenter is at considerable expense in finding his tools.

Other witnesses have described the carpenters as the most sober and steady body of working men in the metropolis.

Bricklayers.

Mr. Oswald Strong, a builder of Camberwell, states their wages to be 5 *s.* a day. They work from six to six, but have half an hour to breakfast, an hour at dinner, and half an hour at four. They, therefore, work 10 hours a day in summer. They seldom get anything by work over-time.

Mr. Benjamin Reed gives similar evidence, but states that the wages from Lord Mayor's day to Lady-day are 4 *s.* 9 *d.* a day.

Bricklayers' Labourers.

Mr. Oswald Strong states their wages at 3 *s.* a day. They work, of course, the same hours as the bricklayers. Both bricklayers and their labourers lose much time by frost and want of employment. They do not generally save any money when in work, but trust to charitable subscriptions and to credit, and when employed have to pay off their debts. They often marry at 18 or 20.

Mr. Reed states the wages of a bricklayer's labourer at 3 *s.*, and at 2 *s.* 9 *d.* from Lord Mayor's day to Lady-day.

Painters.

Mr. Philip Nelson Tomlins, clerk of the Painters' Company, has given evidence respecting this numerous body of men.

The masters are about 1,000 in the metropolis. The permanent journeymen, that is, men employed by the masters all the year, or nearly so, are from 3,000 to 4,000; and the other journeymen painters, who cannot be called permanent, and who are supposed to be employed about seven months in the year, are from 6,000 to 8,000 in number.

The wages paid to good hands are, in summer, 4 *s.* 6 *d.* to 5 *s.*, and in winter 4 *s.* to 4 *s.* 6 *d.* In summer the men work from six to six, having two hours for their meals. In winter, which is from the festival of St. Luke, on the 18th of October, to the 17th of March, the time of working is from daylight to nightfall. In reply to a question, whether painters now suffer as much as formerly from the diseases to which they are peculiarly liable, Mr. Tomlins says:

"Not nearly so much now as formerly. This has been ascertained by a charity administered at Painters' Hall, to men labouring under sickness. The men are now more attentive to cleanliness. Formerly they would throw their clothes on their beds, and go to their meals, and lay down to sleep, without washing their hands. A large proportion of the journeymen now carry a working dress to their job with them, and when they quit work at night they exchange, and put on their clean clothes, which are free from paint. This applies more particularly to those westward of Temple Bar. One master painter of my acquaintance, Mr. Thornton, of Doctors' Commons, keeps a pail of solution of potash in his shop, in which the men wash their hands, and which takes off every particle of paint; and it is worthy of remark, that only two men in 20 years have been afflicted with paralysis in his employ. This is taken from 15 men constantly employed on an average for seven years."

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Mr. Tomlins gives the following additional evidence respecting the painters:

"*Q.* Are the painters, in general, temperate?—*A.* Not remarkably; and from the circumstance of their resorting to houses of call (which are public-houses) to obtain employment, habits of intemperance are frequently engendered. This remark will also apply to large bodies of men in other trades. As relates to the painters, some years since a continuous and vigorous effort was made to establish a general place of resort for journeymen, where masters could apply when extra hands were required. Part of a large house was taken in Holborn, and a superintendent appointed, but the society was finally broken up, principally owing to a want of cordial co-operation on the part of the masters. Had it succeeded, the system would no doubt have produced habits of temperance, as the men would not have had the inducements or opportunity to drink during the time they were in waiting for a call.

"Can you give any account of their moral condition?—Their occupation is favourable to the exercise of the mental powers. In general, they can read and write, and are sharp, clever, persons; few of them appear at the Old Bailey. They necessarily acquire a habit of honesty, as in their occupation they are admitted into the most private part of houses, where property is within their reach, and they must exercise self-control, or they would soon be marked out if suspected of dishonesty, and would not be employed.

"What resources have the painters, who are not permanently engaged during the months of winter?—It is quite enigmatical. They partly live on credit, and pay off their debt in summer. Sometimes they get a little job to do, which enables them to obtain provisions for a few days. I believe there still exist societies amongst themselves, which make a small allowance to men out of work; but it is very trifling. There are societies where they allow a certain weekly sum to sick members, and it is much to be regretted that no general benefit society is established exclusively for this class of men, as, owing to their being subject to sickness from the effects of the colours, they cannot obtain admission into general benefit societies, without great difficulty, if at all."

Tailors.

The tailors in shops usually work 12 hours clear, beyond the time allowed for meals. The larger part now work by piece.

Mr. Michael Luckett states, "Most of the men working by piece do not do so much work as the men who work by time. There is a certain scale or allowance of work to be done in a given time, and a man paid by time was obliged to do that work, and fell into disgrace and lost his employment if he fell short; and hence a man resolutely set himself to do his task; but when they work by the piece, less account is taken as to how much they do, as they are paid merely for what they do; it is in some degree left to themselves. Hence men when weary, or disposed to be indolent, will do much less than they might if urged on to it."

The wages to men working by time is 6 *d.* an hour. Of the men working by piece, a few may gain 36 *s.* a week when employed, but some gain only 30 *s.*; others 25 *s.*, and old men 20 *s.*

Men working at home get their wives to assist them. The earnings of the wives may be equal to 9 *s.* a week, and about half the trade have wives able to earn this sum.

The tailors belonging to societies are estimated at 3,000 in number. In 1810 an enumeration was made, including army and navy tailors, and the number was 5,013.

There are tailors called sweaters, who are thus described:—"A sweater will fit up a room as a workshop, and will employ women and boys, perhaps a dozen, to work for him. He takes home the clothes, and on the Saturday he draws the money for them, and he pays his workpeople at what rate he may have bargained, altogether without reference to the prices paid by the trade. The wages paid to women are usually 1 *s.* 6 *d.* a day, and their tea."

A third part of the clothes made in London, are said to be done by women who set up workshops, and employ other women and girls.

Of the result of the strike of the tailors in 1834, the following important evidence is given. It is what was foretold by Mr. Tuffnell, in a pamphlet which he published on unions and strikes.

"*Q.* Did

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"*Q.* Did the tailors suffer much by their strike in 1834?—*A.* Very much so; we have never recovered from the blow which we then sustained. We were urged on by scheming men to join the general union of the trades of the whole kingdom, and we were made the forlorn hope to first make the attack. We were promised great support from other trades, but we did not receive it. Many considerate men disapproved of it; but it was all in vain. We were sold. Then there were the secret signs, and the secret oaths, and all such folly; and the whole quite illegal. The Dorchester men were transported for it; but hundreds of men every week at that time were sworn in at the Rotunda in Blackfriars-road. Since that time the general appearance of the trade is horrible, and the societies cannot pay sick-money and funeral-money as formerly."

Boot and Shoemakers.

A boot and shoemaker, known to me for several years, but who, for reasons which will readily suggest themselves, requested to be excused signing his name to his evidence, says, that the wages of the men who make the bottoms of boots are 20*s.* to 24*s.* a week, and some get 30*s.* These men are paid by the piece.

Mr. Grove, formerly of the police force, and now of Worship-street Office, and several witnesses, have given evidence of the dissolute character of the shoemakers, but none of them have entered into particulars like this master boot and shoemaker. His evidence is of too original a description to bear condensing.

"*Q.* How many hours a day do they work?—*A.* No man on earth can tell that. They begin in the morning when they like; but if any mortal thing happen, up they are from their stools, and after it; and sometimes they will go and spend their time drinking with an acquaintance; and, to make up for it, they will work sometimes to 11 and 12 o'clock at night.

"Then they do not come to your shop to work?—No, that is against their laws. I dare not keep a man at my shop to work for me; they would all strike if I did.

"Do they annoy you much with strikes?—I am not master of my own shop; they keep me quite under slavery to their rules.

"Are there many steady men amongst them?—I never knew a dozen steady, stable men, amongst them in my life.

"Do they keep their families comfortably?—Anything but that. Their families are in a filthy, abominable state; all in dirt, and wretched. Many of them, instead of having lawful married wives, keep women, whom they call tacks.

"How do they manage when they are out of work?—Any way they can; they must try to live upon credit; sometimes they pick up a little job. One man, out of work, and who has no money, will meet an old shopmate who has money, and they go drinking together, and the man who has money pays for both.

"Then they must often be in distress?—Very often; half of them have not a feather to fly with. They drink a monstrous deal. Hardly a steady man amongst them. A man will send out his coat from the tap-room to pawn, or even his shoes, in order to get money to keep up the fuddle.

"Their money is generally gone by Monday night, I presume?—It very seldom lasts out the Sabbath-day; it is spent at the public-house. Only go and see them at the Lion, in Pearl-row, Blackfriars'-road. Not one in ten goes to a place of worship. By Monday they will be coming to the shop a kicking, as they call it, that is, borrowing on account of their wages which fall due on the Saturday night. One man will say, "Master, let me have a shilling;" another will say, "Let me have two shillings;" and that is the way they go on. There was a man to whom I had to pay last Saturday only 6*s.* 6*d.* He might have earned good wages if he had stuck to it; but he earned last week only 16*s.*, and he had had 9*s.* 6*d.* on account. He was not exactly a drunkard; he was a coffee-shop fuddler. He would sit all day in the coffee-shop over two-penn'orth of coffee. He is a great politician and a great radical, and talks wonderfully about the affairs of the nation.

"There must be some prudent men amongst them?—If there be, I do not know where to find them. I once employed a man who came from the city. He was an excellent workman; he suited me exceedingly well, and I wished to serve him. He removed to near me, and I went to see him one

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day about some work. There was he, sitting on a heap of straw in the corner of his room, and never a bit of stick or furniture was there in that room, but the man and the heap of straw. He told me of his misfortunes, and I took pity on him, and got him a rug and fire-irons, and a bit of a carpet, and a bed and mattress, and an old table and chair or two, and made the place comfortable and Christian-like. About a month after I called at his place again. There was he, sitting at work in the corner of the room on the straw; every stick was gone; he had sold everything, and turned it into drink. There is not such a drunken set as these fellows in the world.

"And these men make laws to rule you?—Aye, to be sure they do. They hold the meeting of their union, and fix their prices; and one or two of them will afterwards come into my shop, and throw down a bit of paper, saying, 'Sir, these are the regulations that we have come to.' I soon see what it is; they have raised the price. I say to them, 'I cannot pay these wages; the trade cannot afford it.' They say, 'Well, you will take your time to think on it; we cannot work for any less;' and away they go; and if I do not comply, never a man can I get to work for me. They are all bad alike.

"Have they never suffered by their strikes and unions?—The trade has suffered sadly, but they are none the better. About 30 years ago, the shoes sold in the shops were all made in London. The fellows raised their prices, so that the masters could not give it. That set them a thinking of cutting out their boots and shoes, and sending them down to Northampton to be made. They got them done there for little more than half the money, so the men lost all that work; but yet you see they are now just such a set of fellows as I have told you."

Bakers.

Evidence respecting the bakers was obtained from Mr. John Roll, carrying on business in Widegate-street, within the district inhabited by the weavers.

Foremen in this trade are paid from 1*l.* to 1*l.* 6*s.* a week; in addition to which they are allowed to eat what bread and potatoes they please at the bake-house, and they take home a quartern loaf a day, and on the Saturday night half a quartern of flour to their families. A second class of bakers are paid from 16*s.* to 18*s.*, and have the same allowances of bread and flour as just stated.

The following is the course of work in this district, in a small business where only two journeymen are employed:

They come at 11 o'clock at night, make the dough and light the furnace; this occupies an hour. One of the two may then lie down to sleep for two hours and a half; the other also may rest himself, but must occasionally open his eyes to see that the furnace does not go out. At half-past two both men go to work; they throw out the dough, scale it off, that is weigh it off in suitable portions for the loaves; they work the dough and put it into the oven; this occupies till about five. The men now lie down again to rest. At seven they draw the bread out of the oven and put it into the shop; they then prepare the fermentation for next day. At eight they go to breakfast, which occupies from three quarters of an hour to an hour. After breakfast there may be a second batch of bread to draw, if the master have sufficient business. At two o'clock they may go home; one returns at five and the other at eleven at night.

The bakers are not exposed to the weather.

In this district the bread is sold at the shops, and is not carried out as in many other districts. The masters are under-price bakers. Where the bread is carried out, it makes some difference in the arrangement of the work in the day.

In addition to the information communicated by Mr. Roll, it may be stated, that it is a matter of notoriety that the bakers as a body are much given to intoxication. The leisure time which they have from five to eleven at night, exposes them to the temptation of going to public-houses to fill up their time. When the trades' unions marched from Copenhagen-fields to Kennington, the bakers were remarked to be the least respectable in appearance of the whole.

Colour Makers.

Mr. James Gibbins is a manufacturer of colours in the Mile-end Road. He pays his men from 15*s.* to 21*s.* a week. The greater part have 20*s.* a week.

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The men work from six to six in summer, and from eight to eight in winter; but taking half an hour to breakfast, an hour to dinner, and half an hour to tea. In answer to the question, "Are there any peculiar hazards to health connected with the trade," he replies :—

"Arsenic and lead are employed in making colours, and hence injury does arise; but such need not necessarily be the case; but although water, towels, and soap are placed at the use of the men, there is no persuading them to be habitually cleanly. After making or grinding colours, they will not take the trouble to wash their hands, but will merely wipe them a little on their clothes, and then will take their bread and meat, by which particles are carried off into the stomach. It is impossible to persuade the men to be more cautious. The lead is much more in use than the arsenic, and, on the whole, does more harm, as the men are somewhat on their guard against the arsenic."

Dyers.

Mr. William Godier, the superintendent for Mr. Chabot, of 61, Fashion-street, Spitalfields, states, that the dyers in his employment earn from 16*s.* to 18*s.* a week, and some 1*l.* For one who gets 1 *l.*, twenty get only 16*s.* or 18*s.* The men work from six in the morning to seven at night, out of which they have an hour to breakfast, and an hour to dinner. They are employed the greater part of the year.

Labourers of the East India Company.

The East India Company had formerly several thousand labourers in their service in their warehouses in London and at Blackwall, but they have now only a few hundreds. According to the evidence of Mr. Lewis Leese, jun., the surgeon attending them, the men are exceedingly select at their first introduction, as it regards their health and constitution. The pay was 16*s.* 6*d.* a week, and, besides, they had medical attendance and medicine when sick, and a pension when superannuated. The hours of labour were from seven to three, half an hour's rest being allowed at eleven.

The applicants for admission have always far exceeded the number of vacancies.

Labourers in the Docks.

For information respecting the condition of this numerous body of men, and of the painters in London, I am indebted, through the medium of Sir John Hall, to Mr. Philip Nelson Tomlins, comptroller of the charges of the St. Katharine's Docks, and clerk of the Painters' Company.

The permanent labourers in St. Katharine's Docks are 200 in number. They work from half-past seven to half-past four, being nine hours, with little intermission. In winter they come an hour later. The wages are 2*s.* 8*d.* a day; occasionally when employed on particular duties they have 2*d.* or 4*d.* a day extra. In the event of sickness, or permanent inability to labour, they are not entitled as a matter of right to anything, but the case may be taken into favourable consideration. Any number of men may be got for these wages.

In addition to the permanent men, the Dock Company employs, as business may require it, from 100 to 1,000 extra men, by the hour, or by the day, as they may want them. There are men about the Dock gates ready to be hired, and there is no difficulty in getting any number, unless at a time when the port of London is very full of business. The wages are 2*s.* 6*d.* a day. If employed by the hour the wages are 4*d.* an hour in summer, and 4½*d.* an hour in winter. Of the men thus gaining subsistence there are 6,000 to 7,000 about the docks of the port of London, and 2,500 to 3,000 about the wharfs along the banks of the river.

Take the year all round they are employed about eight months in the twelve, at the extreme. At certain seasons they go harvesting, and market gardening or selling fruit or fish. They are able to call out marks and numbers, and to write with chalk. Being under a strict watch in the docks, they acquire habits of honesty. They frequent beer shops; a majority of them are Irish residing in Whitechapel, Stepney, Limehouse, Poplar, Bermondsey, Tooley-street, and St. Giles's.

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Of the working men in the docks, engaged in employments of trust or requiring skill, are the assistant foremen who are paid 25*s.* a week, and the foremen who are paid from 30*s.* to 35*s.* a week. The markers and samplers have from 18*s.* to 22*s.* a week.

The coopers, who exercise a craft requiring apprenticeship or long practice, have from 4*s.* to 4*s.* 6*d.* a day.

Gardeners.

Mr. Hugh Low of Upper Clapton pays to the labourers whom he employs in his garden from 12*s.* to 15*s.* a week. They work in summer from six to six, and have in that time one hour and a half for their meals. In winter they work from light to night, and have the same wages; they are employed throughout the year.

Labourers in Engine Factories.

Mr. Andrew Smith, a manufacturing engineer of Prince's-street, Leicester-square, has occasion for common labourers. They receive 18*s.* a week, but when they become more skilful they are paid 21*s.*, and some even reach 24*s.* They work ten hours a day, from six to half-past five, being allowed an hour and a half to their meals.

Occasionally there is work overtime, respecting which Mr. Smith says: "If a man work two hours overtime, he is paid a quarter of a day's wages for this time; and if he work four hours overtime he is allowed the wages of six hours, but such working overtime does the men no good, as the money is sure to be spent in drinking, and a man is unable to come to his work the next day."

Labourers in Granaries.

Mr. Robert Redman, a granary keeper in Mill-street, Bermondsey, pays to his labourers 18*s.* a week. They work from six to six, but are allowed an hour and a half for their meals.

There are always many men out of employment applying for work, and when they get a day's work they are paid 3*s.* for the day.

Horse-keepers.

Mr. Robert Stephenson, a proprietor of a stage-coach from Highbury to the Bank, gives the following evidence:

"The more opulent proprietors pay their stable-men, or horse-keepers, about 1*l.* a week, and sometimes, but rarely, a guinea, but the generality pay about 18*s.*, and some only 16*s.* I have heard instances of only 14*s.* and 12*s.* being given; but these instances are only very rare, and a man takes such a situation only after extreme distress, and remains no longer than he can help."

They must be up by five to clean the coaches and omnibuses, and must be in the way until 11 at night, although not at work all that time. They work on Sundays, but on some roads not so much on Sundays as on other days. It is difficult to get employed, and when a situation is vacant there are 20 candidates for it.

Fishermen.

A proprietor of vessels which sail from Barking Creek to fish in the North Sea, stated that the wages of the fishermen were 12*s.* a week; some had a little more, and there were even instances as high as 16*s.* a week. The captain of a vessel, in addition to his pay, had five per cent. on the value of all the fish which the vessel caught. The men had their provisions and beer found them when on board; an allowance of spirits would cheerfully be made, and might be serviceable in bad weather, but it would be of no use to put any on board, as every drop would be drunk before the vessel got out past the buoy of the Nore.

The proprietor, on being informed that his evidence would be reported to Government, took fright and imagined that Her Majesty's Ministers were about to establish a fishing company. He declined accordingly to sign his evidence.

Weavers in the Country.

Report of J. Mitchell, Esq. LL.D.

CONDITION OF THE WEAVERS IN THE TOWNS OF ESSEX, SUFFOLK, BERKSHIRE, AND HAMPSHIRE.

Braintree, Bocking, Coggeshall, Colchester, and Halstead, in Essex; Sudbury, Glemsford, Lavenham, and Haverhill, in Suffolk; also Reading, Newbury, and Wokingham, in Berkshire; and Andover and Whitchurch in Hampshire.

These towns in the counties of Essex, Suffolk, Berkshire and Hampshire are all put down under one head, because there are several, and these the most important points, in which they all agree.

1. The silk-weaving in all these towns is sent from the manufacturers in Spitalfields, and these towns are, therefore, as far as their silk manufactures are concerned, merely out-posts or dependencies of London, and they have all of them participated in the prosperity and shared in the calamities of the trade of the metropolis.

2. During the existence of the Spitalfields Act, in all of them the price paid to the weavers was two-thirds the price paid in Spitalfields.

3. Since the repeal of the Spitalfields Act there has not been any fixed rule in these towns, but it is uniformly found on inquiry that the price is greatly below that of Spitalfields.

4. The trade in all these places, has suffered much more severely than Spitalfields; in some of them it has been all but extinguished, and in others of them extinguished altogether.

5. In all these places, the weavers in some branches are at all times in the receipt of less wages than the agricultural labourers, and in the other branches, whilst the weavers when employed earn somewhat higher wages than the agricultural labourers, yet, taking into account the time out of employment for some years past, the pecuniary condition of the weavers is below that of the agricultural labourers.

6. The condition of these towns affords a complete confutation to the plans proposed by many of the witnesses examined before the Parliamentary Committee on the hand-loom weavers, and by some witnesses who have given evidence to the present Commission, the chief feature of which was, that there should be one uniform price for the same fabrics throughout the empire; and there is also an equal confutation of a modification of these plans, that there should be one uniform price for the same fabric throughout certain districts of the kingdom, of which a great town should in each case be the centre. It is obvious that such regulations would totally annihilate the whole occupation of small towns and villages. If the manufacturers, even with the advantage of cheaper labour, cannot be induced to send except but a small portion of work to the small towns and villages, they will send none at all if they are obliged to pay as much as for the work done at their own door. A parental Government must look with equal favour upon all the subjects, and can never consent to injure one place for the supposed benefit of another; the weavers of Coggeshall or Colchester are as much the objects of Her Majesty's care as Christchurch and Bethnal-green.

7. No local remedies can be of the least use. The silk weavers of these towns all depend on Spitalfields. Whatever will increase the trade and profits of Spitalfields will increase the employment in these country towns. Until the trade of Spitalfields is improved, nothing whatever, which human thoughts can devise, can at all improve the trade in places depending on that district.

8. If from the pecuniary condition of the weavers of these towns we pass to the moral condition, it may be said of all of them, that as compared with London, it is very much better. As tried by the test of attendance on public worship, there is no comparison. In Sudbury and Braintree, where the weavers

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are most numerous, the evidence of their piety, as proved by their attendance on public worship, is most decided. As regards education, the children of the weavers are not worse off than others, though it cannot be denied that the number of children attending schools is lamentably too few, and the extent of education is greatly less than it is to be hoped the nation ere long will deem sufficient.

9. As far as regards the impression produced on the mind of the Assistant Commissioner by the personal demeanor of the weavers who were examined, it is a satisfaction to be able to say, that they uniformly appeared a decent, well-behaved, and well-meaning body of men, and it was in every case a subject of lamentation that such men as they appeared to be, should be in an occupation which afforded them so inadequate a return for their labour.

Braintree, in Essex.

Inquiry was made into the condition of the weavers at Braintree, and the adjoining village of Bocking, in April and in June. At the first visit, Mr. William Shead and Mr. William North gave evidence.

Silk is the only material manufactured.

The manufacturers giving out work were Messrs. Remington & Mills, Messrs. Carter & Vavasseur, and Mr. Daniel Walters, all of London. Messrs. Samuel Courtauld & Co. are manufacturers of crapes by the power-loom at Halstead, and by the hand-loom at Braintree, and the neighbouring parishes.

The weavers were in general in employment; they considered that 9*s.* or 10*s.* were the average wages, from which expenses had to be deducted, and then about 8*s.* might be taken as the average wages on the whole year, allowing for the time lost by want of employment. These were not so good wages as those of a bricklayer's labourer, who had 9*s.* a week, and three pints of porter a day.

Of the weavers at Braintree, three out of four had come from the plough.

At a second visit to Braintree, Mr. Shead and Mr. North were present at a meeting at the White Hart Inn, at which also were four other weavers; a deputation from a committee of the whole body, Messrs. James Lindsell, William Potter, William Owers, and George Purnell.

They stated that the weavers might be said generally to be employed, but they complained that nevertheless there was a great loss of time in waiting for warp and shute. A manufacturer would give out work to 12 men, where seven would have been enough to do it, if warp and shute had been given to them as fast as they worked it up. The object of this system evidently was to keep a great number of hands in the trade always at command, in order that when there was a great demand for goods, the manufacturer might have it in his power to produce them: this he could do by merely giving a ready supply of shute or warp when such case occurred. Thus, the earnings of the weavers were kept down, although they were said to be employed. This system also kept a greater number of hands in the trade, and thereby kept up a greater competition for employment, and prevented a rise of price when there was an increased demand for goods.

In the article of house-rent, they said that the Braintree weavers had an advantage over the weavers in London, but they denied that they had any advantage in regard to bread and wheat. It is usual for working people at Braintree to buy their own flour, and bake their bread at home; but this was not so cheap as getting bread from the under-price bakers in London. As to meat in a place like London, where there was a great demand for the prime joints, working men could get the other joints at a cheaper rate; but not so in small country towns and villages. Also, in London, after 10 o'clock on Saturday nights, meat could generally be had on advantageous terms.

Very few weavers belonged to benefit societies: the excuse was inability to pay the contributions.

There were clothes clubs usually set a going by a tailor and a publican. The members paid a shilling a week, and also had to take a pint of beer at every meeting on the Saturday nights, which not unfrequently was reinforced by a voluntary

voluntary second pint. If the member were absent, still the pint must be paid for. At every meeting, a ticket was drawn, and the person who obtained it was then entitled to get the garment. He had, however, still to continue to pay his contribution of a shilling every week, until at last every member had been supplied. It is clear, that if all the members behaved honourably, and paid up to the last, then all had the same advantage, except in the priority of obtaining the garment. Sociability seems to be the attracting principle, and there may be cases where a man can be induced to lay by a shilling a week in this way, who could not have sufficient self-restraint to save up his own money until it amounted to the sum required. If he could do so, he would not be obliged to go to the club-tailor for his garment, and would avoid the risk of being led to drink more than he required.

Great complaint was made of the facility of entering into the trade. There is no apprenticeship properly speaking. It is nothing more than a verbal agreement between the parties. It was alleged, that, in former days, apprenticeships were longer. The power-loom being now used in weaving crape goods at Halstead, men driven from employment in weaving crapes took to weaving soft silk goods.

Crapes are called hard silk, from the silk being spun harder. The usual silk goods are called soft silk, for distinction.

The time usually required to learn to weave crapes was three months.

Messrs. Courtauld had formerly men employed at soft silk goods, now they confine themselves to crapes.

The number of weavers in Braintree, Bocking, and the parishes adjacent, was rather under 700. Of these Messrs. Courtauld employed, according to a statement rendered by themselves, to the number of 441; this in addition to their power-looms at Halstead.

Whilst the Spitalfields Act was in force, the price of weaving at Braintree was two-thirds that of Spitalfields.

Complaint was made that the strongest silk was taken to be used in power-looms, whilst the silk which was more troublesome was given to the hand-loom weavers. This affects more particularly the crape weavers.

The weavers were accustomed to keep their windows open as much as possible; they did so at all seasons, unless when it was extremely cold or wet. There never was any complaint from the employers about the silk having lost its weight in consequence of drying by the fresh air. They thought that all was not right when any dread of this kind could be entertained, and a suspicion of part having been embezzled could thence arise.

From Mr. Samuel Courtauld and his clerks information was most readily obtained.

The hand-loom weavers employed by Messrs. Courtauld & Co. at present in Braintree, Bocking, and the nine neighbouring parishes, are 441, of which about one-third are men. By an examination of the books it was found that the average wages of the first 12 men and of the first 12 women on the books, for work done in the end of 1837 and beginning of 1838, was as follows: for the men 7*s.* 2*d.* a week, and for the women 5*s.* 1*d.* a week. The looms are found for the weavers, and their warp is beamed on at the mill, and their shute is wound for them, so that there is no direct deduction except for light. The above are the wages when they are employed; and what must the situation of these poor people be when they are out of employment? They must be wretched in the extreme, and their want and misery must debilitate both body and mind.

A striking instance was manifested of the indolent habits produced by "play." Towards the end of 1836 nearly all the looms were called in, but in the spring of 1837 trade revived, and the weavers were again set to work. Mr. Courtauld began soon to observe that the work came very slowly back, and in fact he was much annoyed at being unable to supply the goods which he found that he could sell. He was obliged to get bills printed, and stuck up in his warehouses, and distributed amongst the weavers, calling upon them to "take notice," that every weaver who took out work must consider that there was an obligation to finish at least one piece a week; that whoever did not do so were liable to have the looms called back altogether, and at all events the names should be entered on a book, and they should be the first to be discharged when trade became slack. A fine of 2*s.* out of the price of the weaving a piece should

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also be enforced. This notice had a beneficial effect, but not until the penalty in one or two cases was enforced, and the weavers saw that it was real earnest. It was ascertained that the men and women had no other employment at the time, and their neglect merely arose from the difficulty of throwing off habits of sloth contracted during "play."

Braintree.

Further information respecting the weavers of Braintree was obtained in a conversation with the Rev. Thomas Craig, as follows:

The silk-throwing was introduced into Braintree and Bocking in 1810; weaving was afterwards introduced also. From the short time that weaving has been established, from the small number of the weavers, and from their being distributed amongst a numerous population, the result is, that as a body they have not any peculiar habits and manners, and they are in their general character the same as the rest of the working people.

They very generally attend public worship. The majority of the population are Dissenters.

In the British School there are 200 boys; they do not pay anything. There are also about 60 girls, and they pay 1*d.* a week; formerly the girls paid nothing, and there were 130 of them. The funds for this branch were low, and it was thought expedient to make a charge of 1*d.* a week, and this reduced the number from 130 to 60. From the poverty of the parents there is a great temptation to keep girls from school, and send them into the silk mills.

There is a national school in Braintree, and another in Bocking parish.

There is no attendance in any of the schools on Saturday.

The poor law works well. With the exception of house-rent, the working people of Braintree and Bocking have little advantage in regard to the expense of living above the working people of London. The town is sufficiently near London to be within the vortex; cheapness is not felt until farther down in the country: London is a sure market, and all articles of subsistence are drawn to it.

Coggeshall, in Essex.

About 22 years ago silk-weaving was introduced into Coggeshall; the prices paid were according to the Spitalfields book, for the different fabrics, taking off one-third. This seems to have been the universal rule in all the towns in this part of the country.

Mr. John Hall is the proprietor of a large silk-throwing mill near the town, and in June 1838 he had nearly completed a very large silk-throwing mill close to the town; he had at one time weaving shops, but he has discontinued that branch of business.

One of the manufacturers who took a part of Mr. Hall's weaving business employed many weavers at making ribands, but he proved unfortunate, and has entirely discontinued the trade. The shop, with the a-la-bar looms, was shut up.

The only manufacturers giving out work at Coggeshall, in June 1838, were Messrs. Westmacott & Goodson, of Spitalfields, who employed from 60 to 70 looms, and Mr. William Beckwith, of Wood-street, Cheapside, who had about a score of looms, chiefly Jacquard.

Information was obtained from Messrs. Joseph Allen, William Alden, James Cox, Ebenezer Benwell, Joseph Maynard, as follows:

These silk weavers stated the average earnings of the men to be about 8*s.* to 8*s.* 6*d.*, and of the women 4*s.* 6*d.* to 5*s.* From these, expenses were to be deducted: loom-rent, 6*d.*; winding quills, 4*d.* or 6*d.*; and turning on and twisting in.

Wages had fallen soon after the loss of the Spitalfields book; they were all of opinion that the restoration of a book price was the only salvation for the weavers. The chief fabric wove for Messrs. Westmacott & Goodson was velvet.

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The wages were lower at Coggeshall than at Halstead, only eight miles off. At Halstead, the 1,000 thread velvet paid 2*s.* 6*d.* a yard; at Coggeshall, only 2*s.*; the 1,200 thread velvet was paid at Halstead, 3*s.* a yard, and at Coggeshall, only 2*s.* 6*d.* a yard. There were about 54 men and 15 women employed.

Inquiry was made why they did not remove to Halstead, where the wages were better. The answer was, that they were unable to defray the expense of carrying thither their families and furniture, and also they were aware that they would not receive any advance on their work, until they had done as much work as came to 25*s.*, and they could not wait so long.

They complained that there was a difficulty in settling disputes with employers; they said that the magistrates leaned in favour of the masters.

In case of weaving silk of certain colours, it was necessary not to let the rays of the sun fall upon it; it was also requisite to shut the windows in the time of damp weather.

The weavers working for Mr. Beckwith had resumed work only about a month. They worked in a factory, and paid 1*s.* a week for loom and loom-standing.

There were still a few looms, not 10 altogether, employed in weaving horse-cloths; the men were worse paid than the silk weavers. It is the last expiring embers of a trade once extensive in this country.

From Mr. Clark, the superintendent of Messrs. Westmacott & Goodson, information to the same effect was obtained.

Some information on the silk trade generally was furnished by Mr. John Hall.

This gentleman, in his silk-throwing mill at Coggeshall, employs Mr. Courtauld's patent spindle. The patent is now expired. The silk thrown by it is well known to manufacturers. The same patent is used by Messrs. Brown & Moy, at Colchester.

Many of the throwsters suffered severely by the great fluctuations in the price of silk in 1836. For some time before the great fall, silk had kept rising, and to a very high price. Thrown silk was eagerly bought up; and as the transactions take place through the medium of brokers, the throwsters had no means of knowing that it was not a healthy demand for the manufacturers, instead of being purchases made by speculators. He considered that if means could be adopted, by which the state of the employment of the looms in the several districts of the kingdom could be ascertained, it would prove of great service as a guide both to the throwsters and manufacturers, and tend to check injurious speculation, and ruinous loss to parties exercising beneficial industry. He did not consider the nominal duty of 3*s.* 6*d.* on organzine as affording any protection to the throwster, nor did he care about it. He thought the duties on manufactured foreign silk goods very necessary for the manufacturer.

Colchester, in Essex.

Information was given by the following silk-weavers: Messrs. Samuel Sadler, William Spinks, Middlebrough, Colchester; Abraham Ladbrook; and Jacob Sadler.

The trade of Colchester formerly was much more extensive than at present. The manufacture of woollen goods, from the same causes which have acted over Essex, Suffolk and Norfolk, gradually declined, and for the last 20 years may be said to have been extinct. Not so much as one loom for woollen goods is now known to exist.

About 40 or 50 years ago, Mr. Michael Boyle, a native of Ireland, introduced silk-weaving into Colchester: a Mr. Doriman afterwards gave out work. The weaving gradually declined. Mr. Woolley, the son-in-law of Mr. Boyle, still has three looms in the town, all worked by one family, which is that of the foreman of the late Mr. Boyle, and it is supposed that it is out of kindness to them that he keeps them employed. In addition to these three looms there are now other looms, but not exceeding in number above from 40 to 60. Of these some are for weaving umbrella and parasol silk for Mr. Foot of Spital-square, London; but the greater part is given out by the agents of Messrs.

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Randall & Anderson of Gutter-lane, London, and consists of satins, three singles, four singles, three doubles, and serges.

The umbrella silk was paid 6*d*., 7*d*., or 9*d*. a yard. The best hands could make 8*s*. a week, from which were to be deducted the winding the quills, the light, and other expenses. The weaver found his own loom. He is now and then without employment. A good deal of brown silk, with figured borders, was wove. A man was engaged making a splendid and expensive pattern of parasol silk, which was to be brought out at the coronation. It was sent down to Colchester to be done, in order to diminish the risk of any other manufacturer taking the pattern. It was made by the Jacquard loom.

The weavers working at the other branches, at the very outside, could not earn above 10*s*. a week, and that was rare. The average was not above 8*s*. During the working of a cane there was generally about a fortnight's "play," waiting for shute. They considered the agricultural labourer as better off, as his wages a week were as high as theirs; there were no expenses to be deducted, and he had additional wages in hay-time and harvest-time; besides which, he had the benefit of gleaning by his wife and family, had some fire-wood, might keep a pig, grow some potatoes and cabbage, and now and then could get a boiling of turnips.

They said that they had returned to the trade in expectation that it would soon be better.

Whilst the Spitalfields Act was in force they had exactly the Spitalfields prices, less one-third. Now there was no general rule.

A foreman in the silk-throwing factory had 12*s*. a week, and an under-foreman had 10*s*. a week. If one would not do the work for that money another would. A man at that work had to be on his legs for 12 hours a day, and it was more fatiguing than weaving, although a little better paid.

The weavers were asked why it was that they had gone back to an employment which yielded so low wages, and still continued at it. They replied, that every man ought to continue at his own trade, and not intrude himself on the trade of other people. Such an answer as that was merely an excuse to their own minds for doing that to which they were inclined, and this was in a degree admitted. They said that a man who had once accustomed himself to weaving never liked going to any other employment. As there were only two masters in the town the weavers were entirely in their power, and were obliged to accept whatever they chose to give them.

Only two or three weavers used the fly-shuttle: the masters would seldom allow it. Sounder work was made by the hand. If anything was wrong in the threads a man could feel it by his fingers when the shuttle came into his hand, but when the fly-shuttle was used it could only be found out by the eye.

In making handkerchiefs 38 inches wide the fly-shuttle was of necessity used, as the web was too broad for a man's arms.

In addition to the last four weavers, the following, Messrs. Daniel Dorbrid, Charles Chapman, William Piddington, Henry Cater, and Samuel Berry, were also examined. They gave the same account of the introduction of silk into Colchester, and of its decline, as the preceding witnesses. About ten years ago there were about 160 looms in Colchester, and then the number was reduced to almost none. Messrs. Randall & Anderson began to give out work in November 1835, and Mr. Foot began the January following.

There were several men in the town formerly employed at weaving, who would again take to the loom if work could be got. They gave the same account of the wages as the preceding witnesses. The weavers of umbrella silk gained less than the others. Considerably less per piece was paid than in London. Great loss of time was occasioned by "play" between each cane, on the average two or three weeks; and in the course of a cane two weeks' loss of time waiting for shute. They never knew what it was to have regular employment.

Of the persons formerly employed in weaving, some had got into situations, some worked at common labour, some for bricklayers, some as gardeners. It would be exceedingly difficult for any weaver out of work to get into any other employment, as there were some hundreds unemployed now in Colchester, who had been used to labour, who would get the preference. About a score of weavers had got into the army.

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In very damp weather it was necessary to exclude the air, for fear of injuring the colour of the silk. At other times the air might be admitted.

A statement of the earnings in weaving parasol silk has since been received from Colchester:

	s.	d.	
Men - - - - - - - - -	9	9	a week.
Women - - - - - - - - -	5	3	—
Boys - - - - - - - - -	4	1	—

Expenses to be deducted: Loom standing, 9 *d.*, quilling, 9 *d.*, turning on and twisting in, 3 *d.* for every piece.

Some pieces are only 50 yards long, but in general the length is from 70 to 105 yards.

Evidence was tendered by John Martin Bennell.

This weaver stated, that he was an inmate of the union workhouse, and had got leave to come out to seek for employment. His children were in the workhouse, with the exception of three, who were sick. He said that he had worked at a 1,000 ten-thread satin, and could earn 15 *s.* a week if he could get employment, and had not to wait for cane and shute. The last piece had occupied, in consequence of waiting for shute, five weeks instead of three weeks. He had been in the throwing factory, and earned there 10 *s.* a week.

Henry Stonehold also gave evidence.

This weaver stated, that he had come out from the union workhouse that morning to try to get employment, and had not succeeded. Many men who had been used to hard work were out of employment, and a weaver had no chance. He was working at a piece of 100 yards warp, which would probably, when wove, be 95 yards. It was 1,400, breadth 24 inches, umbrella silk. He had received advances on the work, but the foreman would give him no more until he brought in his piece: this, he said, would take him three weeks. He had, in consequence, gone into the union house. He said that he could not make above 1 *s.* a day at weaving.

Messrs. Brown & Moy have a large silk-throwing mill, in which they employ Courtauld's patent spindle. Their thrown silk is well known to the manufacturers. The Assistant Commissioner had a letter of introduction from Mr. Alderman White of London, and received from Mr. Moy ready assistance, in the absence of his partner, Mr. Brown, and the following is the summary of the information communicated:

From the difficulty of obtaining a sufficient number of hands at Colchester, they have established a mill at Hadleigh in Suffolk. There was formerly silk-weaving in that village, but there is none now. The younger part of the population engaged in the weaving at Hadleigh have gone into the silk mill. Some of the weavers have gone to Lancashire. They did well there at first, but, from the accounts lately received, it would appear that they had since suffered much, and were only prevented from returning by their poverty. Many people at Colchester inured to labour were out of employment, and whilst that was the case a weaver had no chance of being able to leave his unprofitable trade. The silk trade had suffered exceedingly much by the very high price of silk in 1836, and its sudden and extreme depression. China silk had risen to 28 *s.* a lb., then had fallen as low as 12 *s.* a lb. It has since risen to 23 *s.*, and has again gone a little back.

For one process in the mill, girls of from nine to fourteen are preferred; and for another process, girls of from 14 to 19. Some remain in the factory after that age, but as they do not become more useful, they do not receive any rise of wages.

From the superiority of British machinery, the throwster makes a better article than is made by the foreign throwster. The nominal protection of 3 *s.* 6 *d.* a lb. on foreign organzine is very unimportant; practically, this protection is very small, and does no good; but with regard to the protection of the duties on foreign silk manufactured goods, that is considered as highly beneficial. It

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protects the British manufacturer and his weavers, and thereby secures, also, employment to the British throwster and the great number of people depending on him for bread.

COLCHESTER.

In the country around Colchester, the usual wages of a labourer who goes out with the horses in the team or to the plough, are 10*s.* a week. A common labourer, who turns over dung, works at hedging and ditching, and any other miscellaneous employment, gets 9*s.* a week. During hay-time the wages are 2*s.* 6*d.* a day; but as that lasts only about a week, it yields only 5*s.* or 6*s.* advantage. The sum of 5 *l.* 5*s.* is paid for a labourer for the harvest, which usually lasts four weeks; but it is sometimes only three weeks, and sometimes it is five weeks; the sooner it is over the better for the labourer. But there are farmers who engage the labourers for 5 *l.* 5 *s.* for five weeks certain, and if the harvest be got done sooner, they employ the labourers at some other work until the five weeks be expired. In addition to the 5 *l.* 5*s.* for harvest, a labourer also receives three bushels of malt, value 8*s.* a bushel, and three pounds of hops, value 1*s.* a pound; this is given just sufficiently long before harvest to enable him to get it brewed and fermented before the harvest begins. Some labourers complain that, in consequence of this, they are obliged to drink the ale quite new; but the farmer no doubt has good and sufficient reason for wishing that the time between the preparation of the ale and the commencement of his work shall be as short as possible. A labourer stated that he obtained from the three bushels of malt, 31½ gallons, being 126 pots of beer, not strong, but good, and it was nearly all drunk in three weeks. That many labourers must be under excitement from drinking so much beer is sufficiently obvious. In addition to their lawful wages, labourers are stated also to get possession occasionally of a boil of turnips or potatoes, and some sticks from the hedge. These are all a common labourer's emoluments. He usually rents a cottage and a small slip of ground, an eighth or tenth part of an acre, for a cabbage-garden, for which he undertakes to pay 4 *l.* a year. It is a most difficult thing to get the rent, unless the employer stop it from the wages.

The men who thresh the corn usually work by the piece, and their earnings come to about 9*s.* or 10*s.* a week. In hay-time and harvest they have the same employment as others, and the same advantages. They get a little also of the refuse, called tail-wheat, but this is scarcely worth mentioning. A labourer, who was examined at Stanway, admitted that he earned 14*s.* a week at threshing, and yet was paid only on the same scale as others, and that he was not any stronger than they were. After some difficulty, he confessed that the other threshers could work enough to earn 14*s.* a week also; but they were restrained from doing so, by the consideration that then the farmers would "knock it off their wages," and therefore they would do no more than sufficient to bring their earnings to 9*s.* or 10*s.*, the usual earnings of labourers in the country. He himself knew that he had a liberal master, and was not afraid to earn what he could. Formerly, all the labourers had an allowance from the poor's rate, but such was not now the case.

The labourers were described as being very reserved, and very suspicious of their employers.

Schools are kept by labourers' wives, but very few boys attend above the age of five or six.

The bailiff on the same farm as the thresher just mentioned, had as high wages as 10*s.* 6*d.* a week, and the same pay as others during hay-time and harvest. In addition to three bushels of malt and three pounds of hops at harvest-time, he had, in the course of the year, other five bushels of malt and five pounds of hops, also a ton of coals, and a cottage to live in, worth 4*l.* a year. His wife had 3*d.* a head for every chicken brought up, and 1½ *d.* a score for the eggs which she collected. A carpenter, in the country around Colchester, has 2*s.* 6*d.* a day; a bricklayer has 3*s.* a day; the difference being caused by his being more frequently interrupted by the state of the weather.

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Halstead, in Essex.

In this town, Messrs. Courtauld & Co. have a factory for power-loom weaving, the wheel being moved by water. There are 260 people employed, nearly all females. Mr. Courtauld expects soon to very much augment the number. The wages were stated to be from 5*s.* to 6*s.* a week.

There is also soft silk-weaving by the hand-loom. The only manufacturer giving out work is Mr. Thomas Field Gibson, of Spital-square, London. The men there stated to me that there were about 180 looms; of which 30 were employed at weaving velvet, five or six at figured goods, but there were 50 weavers capable of doing this work, and the rest were at plain work.

The names of the men examined were, Messrs. James Brown, Joseph Wars, Charles Fair, William Ransome, James Morley and George Lovett. They described their condition as being nearly the same as that of the soft silk-weavers at Braintree.

Mr. Thomas Field Gibson has kindly communicated the following letter:—

"Dear Sir, "London, 21 June 1838.

"I am happy to send you the result of my inquiry as to the earnings of the weavers in my employ at Halstead, in Essex.

"The principle upon which it has been made is the same as that upon which I ascertained the average earnings of the weavers in Spitalfields; namely, an indiscriminate selection of names from my weavers' ledger, of the hands employed upon the various kinds of work. The average being taken upon one twelvemonth's earnings.

"The average earnings of married women on satins, 7*s.* per week.

"The average earnings of men upon satinets, 8*s.* 4*d.* per week.

"The average earnings of men upon velvets, 13*s.* 3*d.* per week.

"The average earnings of women and girls, the wives and daughters of weavers, employed in winding silk in a factory, 7*s.* 6*d.* per week.

"It would be easy to select cases from my weavers' book, showing weekly earnings on the various works above enumerated, exceeding this average by 3*s.* and 4*s.* per week.

"I am the only employer of hand-loom weavers at Halstead, with the exception of Messrs. Courtauld & Co., who have still, I believe, a few crape looms at work there by hand.

"I give employment to nearly 200 hands there, and their work is and has been regular and constant.

"I am, dear Sir, your's very truly,

(signed) "*Thos. F. Gibson.*"

"Dr. Mitchell."

Sudbury, in Suffolk.

Sudbury, in Suffolk, is one of the towns in which the woollen manufacture, at one time extensive in the eastern counties, was carried on. For many years it has been discontinued, except a small branch, the making of buntings for ships' flags. Silk succeeded to the wool: the present manufacturers, giving out work, are Messrs. Duff & Son, Mr. Hill, and Mr. Edmunds; they all have establishments in Spitalfields. The number of looms was estimated, by a party of weavers eleven in number, to be about 600, of which they estimated 270 worked by men, 250 by women and girls, and 80 by boys: they were far from being certain as to the number. In the end of April 1838, when this town was visited, trade was very slack; Mr. Duff, who usually employed half the looms in the town, had not given out work for some time; Mr. Hill had greatly reduced the number of his hands, and Mr. Edmunds employed chiefly, or only, women and girls. Hence half the looms were out of employment. The reason given by the manufacturers was the glut on hand of goods of the fabric most usually made at Sudbury. The crisis in America had much injured the trade.

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Mr. Hill did not consider the rate of payment low; he stated the average per week after deducting expenses, when the weavers were employed, to be—

Velvets	12*s.*
Satins	12*s.*
Gros de Naples	7*s.* 6*d.*
Figured goods	10*s.*

At the same time Mr. Hill admitted that, in consequence of the slackness of employment, the earnings of the weavers were at that time exceedingly low, so much so that he would not attempt to say what they were. The Sudbury weavers were less skilful in making fine goods than the weavers in Spitalfields. He had a factory in which many of his weavers worked; he liked the factory, as the work was more under his own eye than when the men worked at home; there was less pilfering, and men, in case of any difficulty, could easily get information how to go on from more experienced hands.

The weavers examined were Messrs. Making, Scott, Goodwin, King, Berry, Must, Dansie Berry, Campin, Andrews, White, and Boswell. They stated that there had been from 30 to 40 velvet looms at work, but at that time there were only five or six. Of Jacquard looms there were only eight or ten, and these were expected soon to be taken down. The chief fabrics were, plain mantels, lutes, and gros de Naples. The wages for plain weaving, they said, averaged, after deducting 1*s.* 6*d.* expenses, only 6*s.* 6*d.* for three thread mantels, and 7*s.* 6*d.* for four-thread mantels. This last agrees with Mr. Hill's statement. They considered that a weaver working in a factory made just about the same as when he worked at home. When trade was brisk, many men took to weaving, from other employments; but very few had done so lately. The children of weavers were still introduced into the trade.

In reply to inquiry as to what were the resources of the weavers when out of employment, they said, they must sell or pawn their goods, get provisions on credit, and do anything they can, rather than go into the Bastille union-house. Of such a residence they had a very salutary horror; they said, "when a man has once been there, and can get out again, it will be very hard with him before he allows himself to be caught there again."

When asked what was their opinion of their condition, as compared with that of a labourer, the following was the reply:

"When we read your book of instructions, which was brought to us from London by Mr. Humphrey Jones, we saw in it what pleased us very much; we saw that you were to inquire whether we were as well off as the labouring classes by whom we are surrounded. 'Oh ho,' said we, 'Government means to do something for us; if they will only make us as well off as the farmer's labourer, or the bricklayer's labourer, we shall be perfectly contented, and we shall not ask any more. A bricklayer's labourer, in this town, gets 9*s.* a week, besides three pints of beer a day, and that is more wages and more beer than we can get. Some weavers working at a fabric which pays high, and kept in constant employment, may be better off than the labourer; but that is not the case with the weavers in general.'"

In respect to the physical condition of the weavers, Mr. Maurice Mason, medical officer of the Sudbury union, stated, that they were more subject than the rest of the population to dyspepsia and pulmonary complaints, which he attributed to their confinement, and the position into which they are thrown by their work. The children were subject to scrofulous habits. In other respects there was no difference between the weavers and the rest of the population.

Of the moral condition of the weavers, as tested by their attendance on public worship, Mr. Wilkinson, the perpetual curate of the two parishes of St. Peter and St. Gregory, stated, that in general the weavers did attend at least quite as well as in any other towns; he considered them to be quite as moral generally as the labourers in the agricultural districts. Of the main body he spoke very highly, but there is in Sudbury, as well as in Bethnal-green, a painful exception of a dissolute class, of whom little that is good, and much that is evil, might justly be said. There is a large Independent chapel which will contain 800 people, and a Baptist chapel.

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The state of education at Sudbury is most deplorable, and what was more painful was the seeming insensibility of the gentlemen, spoken to on the subject, to what was so obviously a lamentable evil; the only week-day seminary for the children of the poor was the National School, of about 70 boys and 70 girls. On Sundays about 180 boys and 180 girls attend. At the Independent Chapel, the Rev. William Morris has a Sunday-school of 100 boys and 100 girls, and there is a small Sunday-school at the Baptist Chapel. Sunday-school education is at the best only better than none, and the small number of 140 children at school on the week-days for a town so large, being 4,677 in 1831, sufficiently shows that Sudbury as to education scarcely exceeds Bethnal-green.

There is a Mechanics Institution with only 60 members, although the subscription is only 8*s.* a year to the subscribers generally, and only 4*s.* a year to the mechanics and working people.

In addition to silk-weaving there is also at Sudbury a manufacture of buntings.

Buntings are a fabric made from hard-spun wools, and are employed for the flags of ships. Formerly the wool was all spun by the hand, but now the yarn is obtained from the mills at Kidderminster or Norwich. A woman now could not earn by spinning above 2*s.* 8*d.* a week.

A narrow bunting is seven inches wide, and a broad bunting 13½ inches wide; the length of a piece is 44 yards. Mr. Robert Goody states, that a woman or a child could weave two pieces of narrow bunting in a week, for which 1*s.* 7*d.* each was paid, making the weekly wages 3*s.* 2*d.*; and a man or woman could weave two pieces of broad buntings a week, and thereby earn 4*s.* 6*d.* There were 200 looms employed on buntings in the town, of which only 20 were worked by men, these being old men unfit for silk-weaving. A few people come to Sudbury from Glemsford to get work in weaving buntings, and there was a manufacturer at Cavendish, near Glemsford, who employed eight or nine looms.

On Electioneering Abuses.

The instructions given to the Assistant Commissioners having directed attention to the effect of the electioneering abuses on the weavers, it becomes imperative to enter upon this subject in giving a report on Sudbury.

This is a borough to which it is notorious that, for a long period of time, gentlemen of property have brought their money for the purpose of presenting to the poverty of the voters temptations which it was calculated they would be unable to withstand, and thereby they would be induced to give their suffrages. The injury thus inflicted on the pecuniary condition, the industry, and general morals of the weavers, appears to have been very great. According to eleven weavers who came in a body to give evidence, there are some but very few weavers entitled to vote by right of inhabiting a house of 10*l.* rental; but there are about 150 weavers on the register, as being freemen.

The whole subject has been clearly and ably developed in the evidence of Mr. John Chrisp Gooday, Governor of the Court of Guardians, and the best report that can be made will be to give that evidence at length.

"*Q.* You are Governor of the Court of Guardians for the relief of the poor of the borough of Sudbury?—*A.* Yes.

"You are stated to have considerable knowledge of local matters relating to the borough of Sudbury; will you be so good as to say what in your opinion is the effect of contested elections on the morals of the working people?—My opinion is this, that the contested elections have done more to injure the morals of the working people in Sudbury than all the precepts or preaching of all the ministers of the Gospel have done good.

"How is that effect produced?—One thing alone is sufficient; the bribery oath. Men openly receive money, and yet go up and deliberately take the oath and vote. Some seek delusive subterfuges. I have heard it publicly maintained that all that a man had to do was to omit the word "not" in repeating the oath, and then he would be swearing to the truth, for he had received money

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for his vote, and the promise of money. Another way was to kiss the thumb instead of the book; but many will not take the trouble even to seek such solace to their consciences as these, but swear straightforward, with perfect consciousness of their deliberate perjury.

"Have you any instance in point to show the effect of such oaths on the sense of truth?—Yes; soon after the general election in 1835.

"A man came to me on the subject of a trial which I had coming on, and told me what he was ready to swear. I knew that what he said was at variance with truth, and told him so. He said that he came to serve our party, and wished me to tell him what he should swear. I told him to leave my office. He replied that money from one side would do as well for him as money from another, and if we would not have him the other party would, and he went to the other side, and afterwards he appeared in the witness-box at Bury St. Edmunds, and there swore facts directly at variance with what he had offered to me to swear. He broke down in the cross-examination, to be sure; but his guilt was none the less.

"When a man has once deliberately perjured himself, his conscience becomes callous to truth. A country fellow will be infinitely more tender in respect to what he swears than a man who has been engaged in a contested election conducted upon the principles they are at Sudbury. This is but a solitary case; but it corresponds with the general system of demoralization produced by the vices and crimes consequent upon the drunkenness, debauchery and bribery at the elections in this borough.

"Large sums, I presume, are sometimes given at elections?—At the general election in January 1835, the bribery was much more extensive than at any preceding or subsequent election. I had the means of making an accurate calculation of the expense attending that election by all parties, and the result of my knowledge is, that the sums of money expended, if equally divided amongst all the voters on the register, would have come to from 30*l.* to 35*l.* a man. Of course many respectable men were above taking money, and 25 persons did not vote; but if these voters had no money, the others had so much the more, so that the whole would have come to nearly, if not quite, 35*l.* a head, as already stated.

"Is it not a most awful crime in the candidates and their committees, first to offer to miserable and poor men sums which their virtue is unable to resist, and to allow the bribery oath to be tendered to them, knowing, as they do, that the voters on both sides must take it, and that their perjury is certain?—I have known nearly 400 voters, out of about 600 upon the register, deliberately perjure themselves. Happily, however, at the last two elections, which were for one member, in consequence of vacancies since the general last election, both sides have agreed not to require the bribery oath to be taken. Any two voters may demand that the bribery oath be administered.

"Are the voters of Sudbury friends to the system of voting by ballot?—Not at all. When the brother of one of the candidates at the general election in January 1835, addressed the electors at the Bull Inn, he said to them in his speech, that his brother was a determined supporter of the vote by ballot, in order to put an end to bribery and corruption. There was an immediate cry all over the room, 'No ballot, no ballot.' They saw at once the effect of that system. It was ill-judged to seek to gain the favour of the men of Sudbury by holding forth such a sentiment as to the ballot.

"Party spirit is said to prevail much over the voters of Sudbury?—So it does; but it is not a party spirit in reference to the general politics of the country; it is a contest of parties amongst themselves, as to which shall make the most money at elections. As to party, in reference to the country at large, the voters know very little, and care even less. Amongst the educated classes party spirit, founded more or less on knowledge, prevails to a great degree.

"Has party spirit much effect on the establishment of institutions for the good of the town?—Very much so; what the one side is for, the other side is generally against; and the town is so small that it cannot afford to be divided; it is scarcely large enough when the whole is united.

"From

"From what period have you been acquainted with the proceedings at the elections at Sudbury; can you give me the names of the candidates, the numbers who voted for them, together with the probable expense which any of them are considered to have paid?"

In reply to this question the witness gave a very full and minute account of ten elections, which fully demonstrates his perfect intimacy with his subject, and the reasonableness of his preceding evidence. The general election in July 1837 was an exception. Respecting it he says,

"This was a very poor election, no money expended on either side; but as the men had, from the commencement of the illness of the King, neglected their work, in expectation of large bribes, the result of the election involved them and their families in great misery and distress."

Such is the picture of the elections of Sudbury. Our present business is with the effects produced by this state of things on the condition of the weavers.

It is obvious that the gentlemen who bring their money into the town for the purpose of influencing the suffrages, and the gentlemen residing in the town who become their committee-men, inflict the most cruel injury on the unhappy voters. Their habits of industry are seriously broken in upon, their health suffers from the unwonted hospitality, their principles of manly fair-dealing are corrupted by the application of an irresistible sum of money from one side, and then, by the irresistible counteraction of a still larger sum from the other, and, worst of all, their peace of mind and their reliance on their Almighty Father are ruined by open, daring perjury, which destroys their sense of moral obligation in this world, and awfully endangers their salvation in the next.

With the subject in its political bearing there is no wish to intrude, but there is one recommendation which it is imperative to make, and that is, that the enactment establishing the oath against bribery be at once repealed.

That oath is perfectly unavailing for any useful purpose. The temptation of money wickedly presented to the eyes of the poor voters completely overcomes their power of resistance, and the administration of the bribery oath is therefore an act of the most wanton, unmitigated mischief. The Rev. Mr. Wilkinson, the clergyman, expressed much satisfaction that the oath had not been administered at the last two elections, and it is most devoutly to be wished that it may never hereafter be administered at Sudbury, nor in any borough of the United Kingdom.

Haverhill, in Suffolk.

There are two branches of weaving carried on in this village, that of drabbetts, which will be noticed in another part of this Report, and that of silk, respecting which it is now proposed to give some account. The number of looms in this branch was estimated by the Rev. Robert Roberts, the clergyman, at about 70.

The principal information obtained is contained in the evidence of the weavers themselves.

Summary of the evidence of Messrs. Thomas Gower, Nathaniel Millerb, Joseph Freestone, William Sizer.

They are weavers of umbrella and parasol silk; they work for Mr. Walters, of London. They do not use the fly-shuttle. A piece is usually 100 yards of warp, but when woven the length is about 94, 95, or 96 yards.

The umbrella silk is woven as follows:

1,450	- -	4-thread	- - 24 inches broad.
1,450	- -	3-thread	- - ditto.

The usual price paid is 6½*d.* per yard for 4-thread silk, and 6*d.* for 3-thread. If the silk be bordered, the price is 7½*d.* the yard of 4-thread silk, and 7*d.* the

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yard of 3-thread silk. A weaver can generally make 16 yards a week. His wages are therefore from 8*s.* to 10*s.*, but from this sum are to be deducted his expenses.

In winter, parasol silk is wove, to be ready against the summer.

1,200	- -	4-thread	- - 20 inches wide.
1,200	- -	3-thread	- - ditto.

The price is 4½*d.* for the 4-thread silk, and 4*d.* for the 3-thread silk; but if there be a border, the piece is 5½*d.* the 4-thread, and 5*d.* the 3-thread. The wages are therefore from 5*s.* 4*d.* to 7*s.* 4*d.* a week. On the average a silk-weaver's wages were estimated at 8*s.*

There was a liability to have deductions made for any blemish in the work.

Altogether the employment was represented as being very regular; there had been no stoppage for the preceding 18 months.

The children had the benefit of a National school, by paying 1*d.* a week.

Reading, in Berkshire.

Silk-weaving has been carried on in the town of Reading for about 70 years past. In the beginning of 1826 there were from 400 to 500 looms, but the crisis in the trade brought on by the commercial panic, and the admission of French goods, produced an immediate effect. In July 1826 there were 16 Jacquard looms at work, and by the 1st of October there were none at all; and so completely did the trade go down, that in 1831 there were not 20 looms at work in the town. In 1832 the work began to increase, and in July 1838 there were about 200 looms employed in silk, and about 20 in sacking.

The manufacturers giving out work were Mr. Gilkes, of Steward-street, Spitalfields, who had 30 looms employed in making figured and plain goods, as well as umbrella and parasol silk; Mr. Jennings, of Cary-lane, London, who had 45 looms engaged in making crapes, and Messrs. Saunderson and Reed, of Milk-street, Cheapside, who had 40 looms employed in making broad silks.

Mr. Bowering had lately settled in the town; he had from a dozen to a score of looms employed in making broad silks, velvets, and shags for silk hats.

Respecting the wages, Mr. George Rickets and Mr. James Roberts give the following evidence:

"The average wages of men are about 7*s.* a week, and of the women from 4*s.* to 5*s.* Out of these wages certain expenses are to be paid.

"*Q.* Is there not a difference between the wages of one branch and another?—*A.* All branches are much the same; the velvet weavers do not earn more than the rest. Perhaps the weavers of the narrow silk are a shade below the rest. In former days, when the Spitalfields Act was in force, the shops, looms, and tackling of all sorts were found to the weaver, but not so now.

"Do the weavers lose much time between one cane and another, and from waiting during the progress of a cane for shute?—It is not so with the weavers employed by Mr. Gilkes; he manages to keep them regularly employed.

"What are the expenses of living as compared with London?—House-rent is less, clothing is the same, meat and bread are not less."

Respecting the shag used for silk hats, they state,

"It is made precisely on the principle of velvet, only not nearly so close; instead of 48 or 50 threads of shute to the inch, as in velvet, there will be only 24 to shag."

In respect of the moral condition of the weavers at Reading, it cannot be expected that so small a number as 200, interspersed in a town of the population of 15,595 (in 1831), can have any peculiar characteristic features. Reading is a town in which religious duties are strictly observed; and, according to the evidence of the Rev. William Legg, the weavers in general regularly attend public worship. There is a large public shop, called the Oracle, supported by an endowment, where there are many people at work, and if anywhere there were

were immorality it might be expected to be found in such a crowd; but there are many men of sound piety and morals there, and immorality dare not show itself.

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Engine Looms at Reading.

Mr. William Brown, superintendent for Messrs. Williams & Simpson, of Steward-street, has given the following statement:

"About three years ago there were 90 looms, now there are about 50. Many of the men have left Reading; some have gone to London, some to Coventry, not from the want of employment, but in expectation of bettering themselves. They have failed in so doing. The pay in Reading is only one halfpenny per piece less than in London, and in Reading the masters find the looms, and the people are at no expense. In some looms 20 pieces, and in others 24 pieces, are made at once. People working at their own houses make as much wages as people at the factory, but have somewhat more rent to pay to obtain a residence having room for the looms. Seven years ago 13 *s.* 4 *d.* was the price paid per piece, and now it is 8 *s.* 4 *d.* A piece may be made in a week, but some cannot do so much. Twelve months ago there was "play" for about 10 weeks, but take an average of 10 years back, the "play" has not exceeded six weeks in the year. Take all the year, and take the whole of the workpeople together, 7 *s.* may be the average earnings per week.

"The power-loom is the cause of the reduction of the wages. The power-looms will turn out three lengths in a week. The price paid to the weaver in the power-loom branch is 5 *s.* a length, whereas at Reading it is 8 *s.* 4 *d.*

"The hand-loom can make a rather better article, as the hand can wait, and keep the shute pressed close, whereas the power-loom bounds off. Bad hands may make work not so good as the power-loom. An inferior silk is capable of being used in a hand-loom. Half the weavers in this branch at Reading are women. There are not half-a-dozen hands under 16 years of age. There is a reluctance to bring up children to so unprofitable work."

Newbury, in Berkshire.

The only house employing weavers at Newbury is that of Messrs. Hawkes & Fielder, who manufacture narrow ribands. They have a large workshop, in which their weavers are employed, and there are weavers who work at their own houses. The number of looms in the town is about 50, of which about 20 were unemployed.

About 18 years ago Mr. Hawkes, who was then in business in Spitalfields, was recommended by his medical adviser to go and live in the country. The Spitalfields Act being then in force, the fabric there was paid 9 *d.* a piece, which was much higher than the work could be got done in the country. This was an inducement to settle at Newbury, and but for the power-loom breaking in upon the trade, he might have had an extensive manufacture; but in consequence of the power-loom, the profits of the manufacturer, and the wages of the men, have been much reduced, and still can hardly maintain the struggle. The same work which, in Spitalfields in 1820, was paid 9 *d.*, is now done for 3 ½ *d.* and 4 *d.* Mr. Hawkes and his partner, Mr. Fielder, estimate the average earnings of the men at about 7 *s.* a week, taking the year all round. The weaving-shop is open from six in the morning to eight at night, and the people come when they please and go away when they please.

There is evidently no prospect of relief for the people in this branch of trade, except a power-loom be brought into use such as may be put in motion by the foot of the weaver, or by a child. That such an invention is possible, and even very probable, will be seen by the evidence obtained at Braintree in Essex, from Mr. Courtauld.

The day on which the factory at Newbury was visited was the 29th of June 1838, being the day after the coronation of Her Majesty Queen Victoria. In

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no town of the empire could the happy occasion have been celebrated with more enthusiasm. As a matter of course, there were exceedingly few weavers at work next day, but it was stated to me, though not by the partners, that very few had been at work in the course of the week. Although broken down in price, they are not broken down in spirit, and are determined to enjoy a holiday when they can, and more particularly in honour of a gracious Queen. To a manufacturer, in all the districts which I have examined, the day of the week on which a holiday falls is a matter of great importance. If Christmas-day fall on a Saturday, it is little more than one day's loss of business; but if it fall on a Monday, it is the same as if a holiday had been ordered by law for the whole week.

On such a loyal and joyous occasion as the coronation of a youthful and beloved Queen, the weavers of Newbury anticipated the solemnity, and devoted a whole week to its celebration. Whoever has visited foreign lands, and observed the holidays enjoyed by the people there, must be perfectly acquainted with the fact, that there is no people on earth which toil so unceasingly as the people of England; and therefore, if they do at times insist on a longer holiday than may be strictly necessary, who has a right to blame them?

An instance of the improvidence too often manifested by the weavers was pointed out in Newbury, but not by the partners. A young weaver, being about to marry a young woman, came and got some money on account. I saw the youthful pair, and they seemed happy and comfortable. They had made holiday for the week; there was no care on their countenances; yet it was expected that, before the week was over, they would have to come and borrow a further sum, to enable them to go on a week longer, until some wages would become due.

Wokingham, or Oakingham, in Berkshire.

This town is about six miles from Reading. There were formerly about 120 silk looms at work; but the trade very much fell off at the same time as the trade at Reading, and for the same cause. It has not since revived; and at present there are only about six looms employed in making shag for silk hats, and the work is sent down by Mr. Thompson, of Spitalfields, from a feeling of kindness to the families who weave it.

The above is the information received in Reading, and it was confirmed by the same information being given in London.

Andover, in Hampshire.

The weaving which is done in this town is on account of manufacturers of Spitalfields. In the end of 1836 and the beginning of 1837, there were as many as 150 looms at work, of which from 20 to 25 were worked by men, and the other looms by women. A sudden shock then took place, which is attributed to the failure of the American market. For above 12 months little or no work was given out; and Mr. Chapel, who gets the work done on commission, began to talk of selling his looms, and withdrawing from the employment; when, as an inducement for him not to do so, a promise was made of sufficient for 50 looms to be employed at shags and velvets. There is another person who gets weaving done on commission, a Mr. Attwood, who at that time employed about 25 looms.

Before the year 1824, the Spitalfields Act served as a guide to the weavers; the price paid being the same as in the Spitalfields book, deducting one-third. Now there is no rule. The price paid is inevitably low; 25 per cent. below the lowest price in Spitalfields. The agent undertakes to the manufacturer to do the work at a rate somewhat below the Spitalfields price; he has to pay carriage, and make a profit for his own subsistence. The small advantage in the price of weaving is not the chief object with the manufacturer of Spitalfields. He keeps up a connexion, in order to have the means of getting a great deal of work

work done whenever there happens to be a brisk demand, and it becomes important speedily to embrace the favourable opportunity. Mr. Chapel has endeavoured, but without success, to get more work to be done. Weavers in the Country.

Of the men thrown out of employment, few have accepted an order to go into the union workhouse. Most of them get employment at times from the farmers, at weeding, hay-making, and harvesting, which together may be three months in the year. Agricultural labour is more advantageous than weaving; and most of the weavers would prefer such labour if they could get it, and leave the weaving solely to their wives and daughters. Report of J. Mitchell, Esq. LL.D.

Whitchurch, in Hampshire.

There are two persons in this town who act as agents on commission for manufacturers in Spitalfields, and give silk goods to be woven. One of these had four looms at work in July 1838, and the other about 12. The only motive a manufacturer can have for doing business in any place on so small a scale, is obviously to have a nucleus or skeleton, by means of which he may get many looms set to work for him, when there is a demand for goods.

Mr. Chapel, a brother of one of these agents, stated that the men in this place were able to get better wages at agricultural labour than at silk-weaving, and the women could get better wages by working in the silk mill.

Whitchurch obtained work in weaving silk merely from the overflowing of Spitalfields; and when the trade becomes very brisk in Spitalfields, more work will be sent to be done. There were formerly many more looms at work.

NORWICH.

The city of Norwich is the seat of a most extensive manufacture, employing many thousand looms in the city itself and in the suburbs; also in villages throughout the county of Norfolk. Norwich.

In reporting respecting Norwich I shall commence with the history of its manufactures, more particularly for the last 60 years. I shall prefix to the account of the weavers of the present time the results of the census taken in September last, and then endeavour to describe the pecuniary, physical and moral condition, including the state of education, in the same order as in the Report on Spitalfields.

History of the Norwich Manufactures.

Norwich is the most ancient manufacturing town in the empire.

In the period of the Saxons the Flemings were accustomed to come over and purchase the wool of the country, and send it to be manufactured in the Netherlands. In the reign of Henry I. they settled in Norwich: they got the long wool spun at a village nine miles north from Norwich, called Worsted, from which the article took its name. The weaving establishments were in the city of Norwich. According to the evidence given by Mr. John Warden Robberds, there are records which prove that a great increase to the manufactures took place about the year 1336.

Our present business, agreeably to the instructions for this inquiry, is with the manufactures for the last 50 or 60 years; and it is most satisfactory to have found in Mr. William Stark, F.G.S., a gentleman who for the last 30 years has been deeply engaged in a business which has brought him into minute acquaintance with the manufactures of Norwich generally, and who has also been enabled to obtain documents and information extending back 30 years further.

Mr. Stark's account is so perspicuous that the best course is to give it at length in his own words, as follows:—

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"Between 50 and 60 years ago, according to the documents to which I allude, and which were furnished by my friend John Francis, esq., the present sheriff of Norwich, John Warden Robberds, esq., Mr. William Enfield, and Mr. Robert Blake, the various manufactures of Norwich were in the most flourishing condition. Many kinds of fabrics were made, immense returns of money effected, and the whole manufacturing population of Norwich and the neighbouring villages, was well and profitably employed.

"The principal articles were camlets for the East India Company, the manufacture of which was exclusively confined to Norwich. Camlet is an article made entirely of worsted; each piece is 55 yards long and 30 inches wide, and weighs about 20 pounds. It is woven in the grey state, and afterwards dyed of various colours, and hot-pressed ready for market. The quantity made annually for the Company varied from 10,000 to 12,000 pieces, to 20,000 or sometimes 24,000. Besides those made for the East India Company, many hundreds were also manufactured for the captains of East India vessels, and called "The private trade." Subsequently the privilege of taking out this article was denied the captains, and the camlet trade was entirely in the hands of their masters. Orders from the Company were received annually; and though the number diminished as the time of their charter drew towards a close, still every season brought orders from them until the final expiration of their charter in 1833.

"There is still a considerable sale for camlets in China; but since the trade of the Company has ceased to be exclusive, the Yorkshire manufacturers have been allowed to send their inferior articles at lower prices, which has done us very great injury.

"At the time of which I am speaking, and for many years subsequently, various other articles composed entirely of worsted were produced in Norwich; they were called callimancoes, satins, brilliants, tays, &c. These were woven in various patterns, which were formed in the loom, and were composed of the richest and most brilliant dyes, and variegated by almost an endless diversity of colours in the forms of flowers, birds, figures, and fancy subjects, upon the face of the goods. Many thousand pieces of these were made annually, and exported principally to Russia, Germany and Holland.

"For the Dutch market was made also a very large quantity of checked and striped camletees, a narrower and thinner article than the camlet before mentioned.

"For the two Leipsic fairs (viz., the spring and autumn fairs), orders to a very great extent were received periodically by the then manufacturers of this city for the above fabrics, besides also for another article called fine narrow camlets. The above trade continued uninterrupted until Buonaparte made his excursions on the continent of Europe; since which time no orders have been regularly sent, either from Germany, Holland, or Russia. It appears, however, that the Yorkshire stuffs have been substituted to a limited extent in Russia and Germany for our goods. A few camlets and satins are still made here for Russia and Holland.

"The article called callimancoes, which, besides those enumerated above, was made to an extent that kept many hundred weavers employed, is now quite extinct. These were made for Russia, where they were used by the Tartars and other Siberian tribes for sashes, for which purpose other articles are now substituted. The callimancoes were made of worsted, about 18 inches wide, and 30 yards long, and were striped in the warp of various colours, in the form of shades, beginning at one edge of the stripe with a light tint of colour, and gradually increasing in depth of shade till the other edge of the stripe was almost black. Sometimes the centre of the stripe would be made of a light shade, and the two sides gradually deepening, till at the extreme edges it was dark. The effect was pleasing, as the colours used to produce these shaded stripes were of the most vivid and brilliant kinds. This manufacture was peculiar to Norwich, and the colours employed for it surpassed any others dyed in Europe.

"About this time, and for many years subsequently, a striped worsted article called callimanco, but woven in the grey, and afterwards dyed, was introduced; this was dyed in the piece, after being made of various shades of drabs, pinks, browns,

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browns, and black, and used generally for home consumption. However, in time, the Yorkshire manufacturers took from us this article; they made it of single warps, instead of double, and their weavers worked for so much less wages, that, notwithstanding they were compelled to send them to Norwich to be dyed and finished, they undersold our manufacturers here.

"In order to show in what state the Norwich trade once was, I subjoin a Table of the Return of one manufacturing house (Messrs. Ives, Basely & Robberds) in the year 1791, which has been kindly supplied by John Warden Robberds, esq.

ARTICLES MANUFACTURED.	Total Amounts.	Italy.	Spain and Spanish America.	Germany.	Russia.	Norway and Sweden.	Holland.	Madeira.	China.
	£.	£.	£.	£.	£.	£.	£.	£.	£.
Camlets - - - -	65,468	9,544	12,816	5,972	7,986	8,193	- -	987	19,970
Camletees - - -	4,423	256	- -	1,725	- -	252	2,190	—	
Callimancoes - - -	17,693	- -	742	388	15,508	51	1,004	—	
Satins - - -	11,036	123	1,402	6,751	1,457	601	702	—	
Bombazines - - -	1,063	- -	910	- -	- -	- -	- -	153	—
Sundry figured Stuffs -	4,860	463	2,425	1,397	- -	180	275	120	—
Lastings - - - -	4,739	98	1,378	245	790	1,494	734	—	
£.	109,282	10,484	19,673	16,478	25,741	10,771	4,905	1,260	19,970

"There were at that period about 30 other manufacturing houses here, so that the annual value of all the goods exported from the city to foreign countries must have exceeded a million sterling, at a period when the whole amount of British manufactures exported in the year was 14 millions.

"Since that time the exportation of Norwich manufactures has greatly declined, in part through the long interruption of commercial intercourse during the war, in part through the change of fashion, and in part from the introduction of the light stuffs of Yorkshire and the cottons of Manchester.

"We had about this time a considerable trade with America in camlets, lastings, and shawls of a very common kind, namely, cotton cloth, embroidered with worsted of various colours along the edges, and at the corners.

"In speaking of cotton, I may mention, that the cotton manufacture was introduced into Norwich about the year 1784 or 1785, and it so increased that in a short time about 2,000 hands were employed in that department. The articles produced were principally shirting, calicoes, checks of indigo blue and white for aprons, &c., cross-overs for sailors' shirts, &c. The articles were in great repute on account of the excellence of the manufacture, and the soundness and beauty of the blue colour employed.

"About 10 or 12 years after the introduction of the cotton manufacture here, the chemical process of bleaching by the chlorine gas was introduced with success by Mr. Michael Stark, which gave a fresh stimulus to the trade. Manchester in a short time made an effort to obtain this part of our trade, and in consequence of their weavers working for less than ours, and from other facilities which they possessed, they in a few years succeeded in taking the whole of the cotton business from us. Mr. Robert Blake (the largest cotton manufacturer here) remonstrated with the weavers, and advised them to work for lower wages; but they resisted all attempts at reduction, and in this they were supported by the magistrates then in power, so that in a very short time the cotton trade of Norwich became defunct.

"To continue my account of the shawl trade. After the cotton shawls (before mentioned) there were introduced other kinds, principally made of worsted and silk, that is silk for the warp, and worsted for the weft; they were known by the name of "Norwich shawls." Many of these were sold plain, others were embroidered with worsted, and some few with silk, in various patterns and colours, some entirely round the borders, others only at the corners. They produced a con-

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siderable trade, and kept many men, women and children employed. There was introduced about this time a very tasteful and light kind of shawl composed of silk and cotton; silk warp and cotton weft. Many of these were printed of various colours upon a white ground, because there was a great difficulty, amounting almost to an impossibility, of dyeing the silk and cotton so as to make them an uniform shade of colour. In time, Messrs. Sims, Pitchford & Stark succeeded in producing a very fine and permanent scarlet upon cotton, which they named "Norwich red;" this opened a fresh demand for the article, and a tolerably large trade was done in it. These gentlemen afterwards discovered a mode of dyeing the cotton a rich permanent and beautiful crimson, as well as pink, orange, and various other colours. Their process made both cotton and silk the same shade of colour, and the application of their discoveries to this beautiful fabric caused a considerable trade in it for about six or seven years. Their process for dyeing the "Norwich red" and crimson still remains a secret with them.

"The shawls just described in time were superseded by better articles made of spun silk; some both warp and weft of spun silk, others with fine silk for warp, and spun for weft. The latter kind were most of them printed of various colours and patterns, and a large export as well as home trade was carried on in them. The taste and style in this business kept progressively advancing, and a kind of shawl was introduced called a "fillover," which with many improvements is in fashion to the present moment.

"The shawls called fillovers are costly productions; they are covered all over, or in part, as fashion may dictate, with various patterns and colours, forming flowers of the most exquisite taste and fancy (which are produced in the loom), and composed of the richest and most brilliant dyes. When this article was first made in Norwich, the weavers employed in producing it earned enormous wages. Mr. Francis, our present sheriff, informs me that a man and his wife wove fillover shawls for him, and the one earned and took 8*l.* the other 7*l.* in a week. Mr. Paul, a manufacturer of the article, told me, that one of his weavers once earned 11 guineas in a week, and many would earn from seven to ten guineas. These shawls were sold at the time to which I allude at a high price, some for even as much as 12, 15 and 20 guineas each. As might be very easily anticipated, this state of things did not last long. The Scotch manufacturers began to imitate our style, and in time so improved their manufacture as to make it acceptable in the market, and in consequence of the lower wages which they paid to their weavers, we were undersold, and our shawl trade gradually declined. Since that time the weaving of shawls has been done for less wages, the trade has increased, and a considerable business in fillover shawls is still carried on here.

"At the time the best and most expensive shawls were made in Edinburgh, the manufacturers there were obliged (in consequence of the superiority of the colours) to send all the spun silk that they required to be dyed crimson and scarlet to Norwich, as no other place in the kingdom could furnish such colours on spun silk as they were obliged to use; and Messrs. Stark & Sons, of this place, received for a considerable time many hundreds of pounds weight annually from various Scotch houses.

"There are two articles of worsted manufacture which were exclusively Norwich articles; I mean lastings and damasks. The manufacture of these was carried on here, some few years ago, to a very considerable extent; many weavers were employed upon them, and a large return of money made. Both these articles are completely transplanted to Yorkshire, and entirely on account of the cheap rate at which the weaving of them is executed.

"One department of the staple trade of Norwich still remains with us, *i.e.* the manufacture of bombazines. This is one of our oldest articles; it is made of silk for the warp, and worsted for weft; woven with a twill, and the worsted thrown upon the face or right side of the piece: it is more used as an article of mourning than any other, and is always ordered for court-mourning. There are two widths of this article; the narrow, about 18 to 19 inches wide, which is used principally for home consumption; and the broad, which is from 40 to 50 inches wide, and principally sent to Spain: both kinds are generally made 60 yards in length. There was a most extensive trade in bombazines about 30 years back, and it continued tolerably steady for some years subsequently, and

and proved a profitable business both to the manufacturers and weavers. The narrow goods, though chiefly used for mourning, were some years since worn generally, in various fancy colours, and remained in general wear for many years; the very fine kinds were worn by ladies of fashion, and the middling classes generally adopted a lower rate of them, as a constant article of dress in the cold season; indeed, they were generally worn in Great Britain and Ireland, and many of them were exported to America. The finer kinds form a beautiful article for female costume, and exhibit a more elegant and graceful drapery than can be formed by any other dress.

"The dyeing and finishing of this article arrived at great perfection in this place, and was for many years exclusively confined to Norwich. The principle of dyeing these goods was introduced by Mr. Michael Stark, who was an excellent chemist, both in theory and practice, and who contributed greatly to enhance and establish the high reputation which the Norwich colours possessed. About, and previous to this time, a certain shade of black was uniformly dyed, and most of the goods, though made in Norwich and Kidderminster, were sent to London to be dyed black and finished. At last the Norwich dyers began to dye the bombazines black, and one or two persons commenced the dressing of them, which up to this time had been confined principally to one person in London. As the demand for the article increased, greater attention was paid to it in every department here. After a series of experiments, conducted on the most scientific principles, in which they were employed a considerable time, Messrs. Michael Stark & Sons discovered a process for dyeing black, upon a principle which had never before been contemplated. Such was the superiority and beauty of this colour, that no other shade could be sold. It had the effect of increasing the demand for black bombazines to a very great extent, and nearly every piece which was manufactured in Norwich, Kidderminster, or Yorkshire, was sent to Messrs. Stark to be dyed. The envy and jealousy that their discovery created, soon put to work every instrument of bribery, treachery, and villany; and at last, by great promises, enormous douceurs, and offers of independence to a confidential person in Messrs. Stark's service, he divulged enough to make known the principles of their process, and in a great measure deprived them of the advantages which must necessarily have accrued.

"This shade of black is still in repute, but some part of the narrow bombazine trade, and the greater part of the broad, is done in Yorkshire, in consequence of the weavers there working for so much less wages. Many, indeed most of the bombazines that are made in Yorkshire, are sent here to be dyed and finished.

"About the year 1819 a new silk-and-worsted article was introduced, called 'Norwich crape.' It was invented by Mr. Francis (the gentleman whom I have before mentioned), and he enjoyed the exclusive manufacture of it for about 12 months. This article was different to a bombazine, though formed of silk and worsted; it was what is technically called tamet-woven, *i. e.* with no wale, and both sides were alike. The quantity made of this article for some years was sufficient to employ the bulk of the silk-and-worsted weavers, and it retained its repute for ladies' dresses for a considerable time. In fact, it was so generally adopted as an article of female dress, as to completely supersede the coloured bombazines, and almost all other silk-and-worsted fabrics. The goods were woven in the grey, and afterwards dyed of an endless variety of colours, and so dressed that the best sorts would vie with the richest satin. For the last seven or eight years there has not been the slightest demand for this article.

"Some few years since, at a season when the manufacture was slack, and the weavers were in great suffering for the want of employment, an effort was made by the principal inhabitants of Norwich to introduce a greater desire amongst the females to wear the manufacture of the place, and a ball was given at the Assembly-rooms, called the "Norwich-crape ball," where every lady appeared in a dress of that article. The general colour worn was a bright ponceau, and it had a very elegant effect, but the relief to the weavers was but temporary.

"Subsequently to the Norwich crape, various fancy silk-and-worsted articles, some of very light texture, have been manufactured, and pretty generally

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adopted for female dresses; such as the crêpe de Lyons, the poplin Français, the silk-and-worsted brilliant, the Irish poplin, &c. The demand, however, for these was not permanent, and they rarely were sought after for more than one or two summers. The weavers of such articles have been very frequently quite unemployed. These latter articles were introduced by Messrs. Edward & Henry Oxley (lately manufacturers here), whose ingenuity in inventing, and perseverance in accomplishing, were unbounded. They also originated and brought to perfection a most beautiful silk-and-worsted article, in imitation of Canton crape. This was done at enormous trouble and expense, but after getting a quantity ready for the market (which took considerable time, from the difficulty and tediousness of the process), there sprung up a distaste for the original article, and they thought it prudent to abandon their imitation of it.

"About six years since the article called "challis" was introduced, which is certainly the neatest, best, and most elegant silk-and-worsted article ever manufactured. It is made on a similar principle to the "Norwich crape," only thinner, softer, and composed of much finer materials; and instead of a glossy surface being produced (as was required on the Norwich crape), the object is to have it without gloss, and very pliable and clothy. The best quality of challis, when finished with designs and figures (either produced in the loom or printed), is a truly splendid article, and has commanded the attention of the higher circles, and been worn by them at their fashionable resorts and parties.

"The above articles had their origin in Norwich, but many of them have been copied in Yorkshire, made in an inferior manner, and substituted at a cheaper rate, for our original texture.

"I consider that not only the above articles, but more particularly the camlets, lastings, and damasks, or (as they are sometimes called) bed-furniture, are manufactures originating in, and peculiarly belonging to Norwich. The two latter are entirely taken from this city, in consequence of the Yorkshire people being able to produce them at a lower price; and the camlet trade is in such a state of competition, in consequence of the low wages that are paid to weavers and others employed in every department of the manufactures in the north of England, that it is impossible for the Norwich manufacturers, at their present rate of weavers' wages, to compete with the Yorkshiremen, so as to afford them a profit.

"We have one advantage in the camlet trade, which is, that they are made decidedly better here than those made in Yorkshire, but the instances are but few where superiority of make is considered equivalent to additional price. During the existence of the East India Company's trading charter, quality always stood paramount, and Norwich kept the lead in this. Since the expiration of that charter, I fear the reverse is the case, as regards the camlet business.

"The broad bombazines, so many of which were made here for the Spanish market, have nearly all been taken from us, and many thousands which used to be returned in that trade annually, are, in consequence of the lowness of weavers' wages in Yorkshire, entirely lost to this city.

"It is my opinion, as well as that of many other persons who have considered the subject, that there are two principal causes why the trade of Norwich has been so pirated. The first is, the want of keeping pace with the North in the introduction of machinery; and the second is, the want of an enterprising spirit in those who had the means and the money, but not the inclination, to keep pace with the march of improvement. This is sad folly, where so much taste and talent were shown by the invention and introduction of new fabrics, and various articles of ingenuity and fashion, as have been always predominant amongst the manufacturing population of Norwich.

"For many years we paid an amount in poor's-rate, to support those out of employment, that would have built mills and supplied them with machinery sufficient to have kept every able man, woman, and child in profitable work and comfortable circumstances.

"It may be asked, Why was not this done? I believe simply on account of the existence of a violent and odiously virulent party spirit. The same feeling exists now, and will continue to operate as it has always done to defeat all attempts

attempts to improve the state of the city either pecuniarily, morally, or mentally.

"No man of either political party, be it which it may, could introduce machinery into this city, though it were as evident as the sun at noon-day that it must necessarily be for the general good, but he would in all probability, at some paltry election contest (particularly if he took an active part in it), be held up as an obnoxious individual, perhaps as one who had been the cause of the lowering of wages, or some such absurdity, and his property and perhaps his life endangered thereby; and my firm opinion is, that whilst the present detestable party animosity exists, no one will attempt to keep pace with any other manufacturing communities.

"The time, however, must come, but probably too late, when our present opposers of the great advancement in society will see their folly. They have already felt it with a vengeance."

As the city of Norwich is considered as owing much of its manufacturing prosperity to the excellence of its dyeing, Mr. Stark was requested to give a general account of it, which he has done as follows:

"I believe that Norwich has always stood proudly pre-eminent in this respect, and whatever article may have been introduced, no disappointment was ever experienced, nor the manufacture of any article abandoned on account of the want of the most perfect colours.

"It would be difficult for me to give a long and connected account of the dyeing business of Norwich; I can, however, state that my worthy father, who was an ardent pursuer of science, and particularly of chemistry, devoted his life to discoveries and improvements in the dyeing business. It is to him that Norwich is indebted for her high character in this respect. He was the first who introduced the beautiful shades which were used in the manufacture of callimancoes, &c., before mentioned. He brought the chemical mode of bleaching cotton to bear on a large scale; it was he who introduced the dyeing of cotton blue by the cold vat; the dyeing of worsted of various, indeed every known colour, by the application of the aluminous and metallic mordants in combination with the three primitive colours, and many other most important improvements.

"He was in communication with many scientific men of his day, particularly with Dr. Bancroft, whom he assisted greatly in his experiments on the quercitron bark; with Mr. George Macintosh, of Glasgow, in trials with his cudbear, and many other men of character and scientific reputation: in fact he devoted 50 years of his life to the dyeing business of Norwich, and the reputation her manufactures have borne for excellent colours is mainly owing to Mr. Michael Stark."

In the month of November last, having ascertained that Mr. Stark had just returned from a tour through the manufacturing districts of the north of England, the following very important evidence was obtained respecting the fabrics now made in that part of the kingdom by machinery, of goods which until lately were considered as being exclusively Norwich articles. Considering this evidence to be an important sequel to the history of the Norwich manufactures, I deem it right to report it at length.

"*Q.* You have, I understand, lately visited the manufacturing districts of Yorkshire?—*A.* I have; and paid particular attention to the productions of Leeds, Halifax, and Bradford.

"Did you observe any articles manufactured there which are now, or were formerly, exclusively confined to Norwich?—I observed many. In Halifax, they were making a great many broad bombazines, which a few years since were entirely confined to Norwich, and a very considerable trade was carried on in them between this city and various parts of Spain and Portugal. They were making lastings, damasks, challis, &c. in great numbers. The manufacture of all these was some years ago confined to Norwich. Camlets also (the great staple article of the Norwich manufacturers) are made at Halifax, and many or most of them by steam power.

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"I am informed that the camlets made in Norwich are very superior to those made in Yorkshire by steam power?—They certainly are; but the Yorkshire ones are made so much cheaper, and are sent out at prices so much lower than those which are manufactured at Norwich, that they have to a considerable extent superseded them in some of the foreign markets. The Norwich camlets are still much preferred in China, and were always purchased by the East India Company, in preference to all others, to supply that market. Since the trade to China has been thrown open, however, many merchants have shipped Yorkshire camlets to a very great extent, and pushed a trade in them, to the exclusion of the superior Norwich fabric.

"Are other places in Yorkshire producing manufactures, generally called 'Norwich articles'?—Yes, Leeds is doing a considerable business in camlets; and at Bradford, almost every article which originated in Norwich, and at one time was considered as exclusively confined to it, is now making. For instance, camletees, lastings, damasks, princettas, bombazines, challis, &c.

"This, I presume, arises on account of those articles being produced cheaper in the places you have named; how is this effected?—I conceive entirely by the adoption of machinery for their production, against the use of which there is a very foolish and erroneous feeling in Norwich. Had we kept pace with the improvements of the age, we might still have retained our business, and been in a flourishing condition at this moment; but we have constantly been embroiled in petty, paltry, local political contentions; and certain parties, who ought to have devoted their talents and property to the improvement of the trade of the city, have given up their time to these virulent and useless broils, and suffered its main supports to be dragged away, bit by bit, till now scarcely anything remains.

"Do you think that the introduction into your city of the advantages which other places you have named possess, would restore its trade?—I see no reason on earth why it should not. We have talent of every kind, suitable to the advances of the manufacture; we have the most careful and ingenious weavers, and I believe they are quite equal to the production of any fabric.

"Do you consider that the use of machinery, as applied to the manufacture of camlets, merinos, &c., is of advantage to the public?—As to its ultimate beneficial effects, considered as a general question, I am not able to form an opinion; but as to the great advantages which accrue to those places where machinery is adopted, over those where it is not in use, for the purposes of producing the articles I have named, there cannot be the slightest doubt about. The loss of our manufactures has arisen principally, probably entirely, from the use of machinery for their production; and I see no possibility of their being restored to us, till the same means are adopted here.

"There is one thing which particularly struck me in visiting the towns where machinery was most in use, and that is the excellent condition of the labouring people. They were well clothed, well fed, and well employed; and many workmen were pointed out to me who were now making great earnings and saving money in a factory, who, whilst they were hand-loom weavers, were in a starving state. Whether such a state of things would have been had all remained hand-loom weavers, it is impossible to form a conjecture; but it is now as evident as the sun at noon-day, that any place which will not march on with the advances of the age must necessarily retrograde. There is no quiescent state, either in the moral or physical world."

Before reporting on their present condition, I lay before the Central Board the results of the census of the weavers of Norwich.

In order to obtain a census of the weavers of Norwich, the same means were adopted as in Spitalfields, and the persons employed were instructed to distinguish men, women, boys, girls, apprentice boys, and apprentice girls; and also the several principal fabrics made in the city and its vicinity, as bandanas, bombazines, including paramattas, a nearly similar fabric, camlets, camletees or narrow camlets, fillover or ornamented shawls, gauzes, princettas, a fabric of silk and worsted warp and worsted shute, sacking, silk, silk shawls, woollen, woollen shawls, woollen generally, horse-hair, jacquard, coach-lace, lustres, and lastly, challis, with which were classed other fabrics, as mousseline-de-laine, and a few others not included in any of the above. The men employed were

Messrs.

Messrs. Brightwell, Love, Lynes, Nethercote, Pye, Spalding, Starkey and Weaver.

The result of the whole Census will appear in the following Table:—

FABRIC.	Men.	Women.	Boys.	Girls.	Apprentice Boys.	Apprentice Girls.	Total.
Bandana	86	65	2	5	-	-	158
Bombazine	803	389	7	4	1	1	1,205
Camlets	87	5	-	-	-	-	92
Camletees	6	13	1	-	-	-	20
Fillovers	212	2	1	-	6	-	221
Gauzes	25	440	6	28	-	1	500
Princettas	234	7	1	-	-	-	242
Sacking	45	-	-	-	-	-	45
Silk	16	22	-	-	-	-	38
Silk shawls	74	84	3	5	-	-	166
Worsted shawls	22	1	3	-	-	-	26
Woollen	22	-	-	-	-	-	22
Horse-hair	17	-	-	-	-	-	17
Jacquard	30	-	-	-	-	-	30
Coach-lace	19	3	-	-	-	-	22
Lustres	3	-	-	-	-	-	3
Challis, Yorkshire stuffs, mousseline - de - laine, fringes, &c.	510	617	84	35	-	1	1,247
	2,211	1,648	108	77	7	3	4,054

The number of Looms unemployed was as follows:—

Worked by men	411
— women	498
— boys	69
— girls	43
	1,021

This makes the whole number of looms in Norwich and its vicinity 5,075.

Of the 4,054 looms employed there are 3,398 in the houses of the weavers, and 656 in shops and factories, as follows:—

Looms in the Houses of the Weavers.

FABRIC.	Men.	Women.	Boys.	Girls.	Apprentice Boys.	Apprentice Girls.	Total.
Bandanas	86	65	2	5	-	-	158
Bombazines	735	335	7	4	1	1	1,083
Camlets	87	5	-	-	-	-	92
Camletees	6	13	1	-	-	-	20
Fillovers	89	2	1	-	-	-	92
Gauzes	25	281	6	28	-	1	341
Princettas	233	7	1	-	-	-	241
Silks	16	22	-	-	-	-	38
Silk shawls	0	80	3	5	-	-	158
Worsted shawls	21	1	3	-	-	-	25
Jacquards	1	-	-	-	-	-	1
Lustres	3	-	-	-	-	-	3
Challis, Yorkshire stuffs, mousseline - de - laine, fringes, &c.	491	572	49	33	-	1	1,146
	1,863	1,383	73	75	1	3	3,398

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Looms in Shops and Factories.

FABRIC.	Men.	Women.	Boys.	Girls.	Apprentice Boys.	Apprentice Girls.	Total.
Bombazines	68	54	-	-	-	-	122
Filiovers	123	-	-	-	6	-	129
Gauzes	-	159	-	-	-	-	159
Princettas	1	-	-	-	-	-	1
Sacking	45	-	-	-	-	-	45
Silk shawls	4	4	-	-	-	-	8
Worsted shawls	1	-	-	-	-	-	1
Woollen	22	-	-	-	-	-	22
Horse-hair	17	-	-	-	-	-	17
Jacquard	29	-	-	-	-	-	29
Coach-lace	19	3	-	-	-	-	22
Challis, Yorkshire stuffs, mousseline - de - laine, fringes, &c.	19	45	35	2	-	-	101
	348	265	35	2	6	-	656

The 3,398 Looms in the houses of the Weavers are distributed as follows:—

Families having 1 loom	-	1,294	1,294
— 2 looms	-	798	1,596
— 3 looms	-	114	342
— 4 looms	-	30	120
— 5 looms	-	8	40
— 6 looms	-	1	6
			3,398

As it frequently occurs that some members of a family having looms at home do work in the shops and factories, the above will not give a complete view of the distribution of the weaving population. It is obvious, however, that by far the greater part of the looms are worked by families having only one or two.

The shops and factories have some as few as two looms, and the factory of Messrs. Grout, Ringer & Martin has as many as 149. The general distribution is as follows:—

Shops and Factories.

	Shops.	Looms.		Shops.	Looms.
Of 2 looms	1	2	Of 15 looms	3	45
3 —	2	6	18 —	1	18
4 —	4	16	20 —	1	20
5 —	2	10	26 —	1	26
6 —	4	24	30 —	1	30
7 —	1	7	40 —	1	40
8 —	4	32	47 —	1	47
9 —	1	9	51 —	1	51
10 —	4	40	149 —	1	149
11 —	2	22			
12 —	4	48		41	656
14 —	1	14			

The

The looms are not all within the walls of the city, but several are in the suburbs; and if Norwich become a thriving place, as it may be made to be, the suburbs will no doubt greatly extend.

Looms in	Sprowston and Old Catton	100
—	Philadelphia	54
—	New Catton	254
—	Heigham	331
—	Crooks-place and Union-place	141
—	New Lakenham	179
—	Spitalfields	59
		1,118

Of the Wages of the Weavers.

In the city of Norwich there has never been an Act of Parliament to regulate wages as in Spitalfields, but in lieu thereof there has been a scale of prices, either agreed upon by the weavers and the manufacturers together, or arranged by the weavers and submitted to by the manufacturers, and such scale has been enforced by the union of the weavers, and by their committee, with a vigour which until of late years produced the most decided conformity. In the course of the last war a rise took place, in consequence of the increased expense of provisions, and that scale was maintained after the original cause had ceased, until the year 1829, when it was reduced about 20 per cent., which left it nearly as it was before the rise. No further general reduction has taken place since, and if there were full employment at such scale the weavers would be in a situation which might be considered sufficient for their comfortable maintenance. Such however has not been the case; there is a great amount of "play," that is, time unemployed, so that whilst the rate of payment is good, the amount of the earnings is small. In addition to which, the fabrics which pay best are not so much in public favour as they were formerly, and accordingly a less number is now engaged on them, and the rest are engaged on the low-paying fabrics. Consequently, take the weaver's situation altogether, his earnings at present are very low.

Mr. Willett states that the weavers are out of employment one-third of the year, and some much more. Mr. James Spalding, an operative, gives the same account, and all the evidence is in accordance. A weaver therefore who earns 15*s.* a week when employed, has an average income of only 10*s.* a week, and so on.

The bombazines pay better than most other goods, and in Norwich there is a general opinion that the bombazines are the goods which are sent out to be made in the villages, whilst the low-paying goods are left to be done in Norwich. Such however is not the fact, to the extent which they believe; some bombazines are sent into the villages, but a much larger proportion of low-paying goods go at the same time.

The first impression of the manufacturers in Norwich, as in every other place, is, that their weavers are earning more than is actually the case. It is only by taking an account from the books that the truth can be ascertained; some of the manufacturers have expressed their surprise on finding, after taking this account, that the weavers' wages were so much less than they had supposed.

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The wages earned by the weavers employed by Messrs. Henry and Edward Willett, as certified by Mr. Henry Willett, are as follows:

Exhibition of the Average Earnings per Week of Sixty Weavers on the following Four Fabrics.

Page.	Article.	Quality or Rate.	Weavers on each Fabric.	Average Number of Days, &c. at Work.	Total Amount Earned.	Average Earnings of each Weaver.
		Rate.			£. *s.* *d.*	*s.* *d.*
E. 21	figured challi -	84	10 men -	55 days, *i. e.* 8 weeks	64 9 9	16 –
L. 328	plain challi -	90	10 men -	26 – 3¾ –	28 16 8	14 3
L. 282	- ditto - -	78	10 men -	41 – 6 –	39 7 6	13 –
H. 242	bombazines -	39	10 men -	34 – 5 –	31 5 –	12 6
M. 76	- ditto - -	32	10 women	39 – 5½ –	22 3 8	8 –
L. 135	cotton, &c. -	60	10 women	29 – 4 –	14 – –	7 –
Mr. Willett afterwards gave the following:						
97, &c.	fillover - -	60	5 men -	42 – 6 –	38 4 7	25 6

For every 100 men and boys employed in weaving, 64 women and girls are employed.

Statements were received from many other manufacturers. Mr. John Francis, sheriff of the city and county of the city of Norwich, writes as follows:

"Sir,

"I have taken out the earnings of the weavers employed by me for 26 weeks. The number is 348, consisting of male and female, young and old, good and bad, quick and slow, on the different articles which I have made during that period, and find the average to be per week, to each weaver, 7*s.* and the fraction of a penny, stops included.

"I am, sir, your's respectfully,

'To Dr. Mitchell, Norwich, (signed) *John Francis.*
16 April 1838."

Mr. Philip Breeze, warehouseman to Mr. Francis, gives a more detailed account, which will show more distinctly the wages of each class of persons.

BANDANAS.

	FOLIOS.	DAYS.	WAGES.	PER WEEK.
Men:			£. *s.* *d.*	*s.* *d.*
Old married - - - - - -	2	303	18 17 7	8 9
Middle-age married - - - - -	31	329	16 6 2	7 –
Ditto - - - - - - - -	38	192	16 – 3	11 8
Ditto - - - - - - - -	42	183	16 17 5	12 10
Young single - - - - -	68	168	12 16 8	10 7
Ditto - - - - - - - -	133	271	16 16 8	8 10
Totals and general Average - - -		1,446	97 14 9	9 6
Women:				
Middle-age married - - - -	52	395	19 10 9	7 –
Ditto - - - - - - -	73	465	17 11 4	5 3
Young single - - - - -	78	395	16 6 3	5 10
Middle-age married - - - -	106	477	19 – 6	5 6
Young single - - - - -	111	317	19 12 6	8 7
Middle-age married - - - -	121	535	20 14 10	5 –
Totals and general Average - - -		2,584	112 16 2	6 1½

Cotton Warps.

	Folios.	Days.	Earnings.	Per Week.
			£. s. d.	s. d.
Men:				
Middle-age married	37	149	5 12 5	5 3
Ditto	49	74	4 17 6	9 2
Ditto	57	134	7 13 8½	8 –
Young single	82	102	7 1 9½	9 9
Old married	94	191	9 13 3	7 –
Ditto	147	175	9 12 4½	7 8½
Middle-age married	194	87	5 14 7½	9 2
Young married	219	106	7 8 6½	9 9
Totals and general Average		1,018	57 14 2½	7 10½
Women:				
Middle-age married	1	198	8 19 4½	6 3
Young married	41	109	5 2 3½	6 8
Middle-age married	63	384	17 16 10½	6 5
Aged married	91	68	4 6 5	8 10½
Young married	99	167	7 15 6½	6 5
Middle-age married	102	160	8 1 3	7 –
Young married	113	208	8 17 4	6 –
Middle-age married	116	195	6 12 5½	4 10
		1,489	67 11 6½	6 5

Sundry Works.

	Folio.	Days.	Earnings.	Per Week.
			£. s. d.	s. d.
Man, 1 sort	2,108	262	15 19 –	8 5½
Man, 1 sort	2,146	187	20 – 8	15 –
Man, 1 sort	2,151	243	22 2 5	12 6½
Man, 1 sort	2,196	232	17 16 3	10 9
Man, 1 sort	2,206	103	9 16 8	13 5
Woman, 1 sort	2,211	134	10 17 3	11 4½
Man, 6 sorts	2,212	412	31 – 9	10 6
Woman, 2 sorts	2,231	359	24 19 4	9 9
Man, 5 sorts	2,263	360	33 18 1	13 6
Man, 4 sorts	2,448	361	30 1 11	11 8
Man, 1 sort	2,490	366	27 3 9½	9 3
Woman, 2 sorts	2,497	357	36 17 7	14 5
Man, 2 sorts	2,505	305	31 13 4	14 7
Man, 2 sorts	2,506	360	23 10 9½	9 1
Man, 2 sorts	2,507	363	29 13 1	10 10
Man, 2 sorts	2,516	362	29 12 9	10 10
Woman, 1 sort	2,571	362	20 7 –	7 10½
Man, 4 sorts	2,709	338	40 10 9½	16 9

From Messrs. Bolingbroke, Enfield & Co. the following account was received:

Twenty weavers (men) employed on fine bombazines, alapines, and paramattas:

Number of weavers, 20.
Weeks each, 12.
Money earned, 164*l.* 11*s.* 1*d.*
Average to each, per week, 13*s.* 6½*d.*
Including play, 9½ days each.

Twenty weavers employed on low bombazines, checks, and challis:

Number of weavers, women and men, 20.
Weeks each, 12.
Money earned, 101*l.* 9*s.* 1*d.*
Average to each per week, 8*s.* 5½*d.*
Including play, 10¼ days each.

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Twenty men employed in weaving bandana cloth:

Number of weavers, 20.
Weeks each, 11 ½.
Money earned, 106*l.* 9*s.* 6*d.*
Average to each per week, 9*s.* 4*d.*
Including play, 1 ¼ days each.

The above is taken from December 1837 to March 1838, inclusive.

Pro Bolingbroke, Enfield & Co.,

Norwich, 5 April 1838. (signed) *Jesse Minns*, Warehouseman.

The above may be considered a fair average of all the weavers in the employ of B. E. & Co.

(signed) *J. M.*

Mr. Charles Middleton, through his warehouseman, Mr. Spinks, has given the wages of his weavers, as follows:—

First Class.

Twelve weavers constantly employed on fine bombazines:

Days employed, 1,870.
Earnings, 194*l.* 15*s.* 7*d.*
Average to each per week, 14*s.* 7*d.*

Second Class.

Twelve weavers generally employed on bombazines and other work:

Days employed, 1,845.
Earnings, 134*l.* 10*s.* 5*d.*
Average per week, 10*s.* 2½*d.*

Third Class.

Twelve weavers generally employed on challis and light work:

Days employed, 1,906.
Earnings, 90*l.* 17*s.* 8*d.*
Average per week, 6*s.* 8*d.*

The above classes have generally employment. There are others who are occasionally employed by me and other manufacturers, of the earnings of whom no correct calculation can be made.

For Mr. Charles Middleton,

(signed) *S. Spinks.*

From Messrs. Shickle, Towler & Co., the following account was received:

Ten men employed weaving fine bombazines:

Number of weavers, 10.
Time employed, including Sundays and all stops, 1,851 days.
Money earned, 165*l.* 15*s.* 10½*d.*
Average to each per week, 12*s.* 6*d.*

Ten women employed weaving middling and coarse bombazines:

Number of weavers, 10.
Time employed, including Sundays and all stops, 1,840 days.
Money earned, 98*l.* 0*s.* 4½*d.*
Average to each per week, 7*s.* 5¼*d.*

Twelve men employed weaving paramattas, saxonies, and challis:

Number of weavers, 12.
Time employed, including Sundays and all stops, 1,265 days.
Money earned, 116*l.* 13*s.* 8½*d.*
Average to each per week, 12*s.* 10*d.*

Per pro Shickle, Towler & Co.,

(signed) *H. Gunton.*

From Messrs. Massey & Son, the following statement was received, through Mr. Williams, their warehouseman and clerk:

Gross earnings.

No. 1.—Ten men, each 20 weeks, average 13*s.* 10*d.* a week.
No. 2.—Ten men - - — - - — - 10*s.* 9*d.* —
No. 3.—Ten men - - — - - — - 6*s.* 7½*d.* —
No. 4.—Ten women - — - - — - 7*s.* 4*d.* —

No. 1 are upon the best work, fine bombazines.
No. 2 are upon secondary work, paramattas and middling bombazines.
No. 3 are upon the lowest bombazines, challis, &c.
No. 4 are upon bombazines, generally below 33 *s.* 3*d.*

For Massey & Son,

(signed) *J. Williams*, jun.,
Warehouseman and Clerk.

9 April 1838.

Of the Expenses of the Weavers.

From the weaver's gross earnings must be deducted his expenses.

Mr. Fish, and the deputation accompanying him, gave the following account:

	£.	s.	d.
Extra rent on account of loom - - - - -	-	-	6
Winding - - - - - - - - - -	-	1	-
Candles - - - - - - - - - -	-	-	3
Beaming-on - - - - - - - - - -	-	-	1
Twisting-in - - - - - - - - - -	-	-	4
Cord to repair the loom-picker, to pull the fly-shuttle and shuttle - - - - - - - - - -	-	-	1
£.	-	2	3

The beaming-on and twisting-in occur only to every new web, say every six weeks; and the above is the sixth part of what is paid when these operations are performed.

When bombazines are wove, there must be added another 6*d.* for winding, making the expenses 2*s.* 9*d.* a week. This is for a man in full employment, and making good earnings. When the man is not fully employed, his loom-rent remains the same, but all the other expenses are less in proportion.

Mr. Spinks gave the following statement:

	£.	s.	d.
Winding - - - - - - - - - -	-	1	6
Rent (extra) - - - - - - - - - -	-	-	6
Candles - - - - - - - - - -	-	-	3
Pickers and cord - - - - - - - - - -	-	-	1½
Beaming-on - - - - - - - - - -	-	-	1½
Dressing - - - - - - - - - -	-	-	1
Change of work and other expenses, namely, twisting-in, &c.	-	-	3
	-	2	10
Deduct for weaver who is at no expense for sleight, that is, wear and tear of clothes, comparatively with other trades	-	-	3
£.	-	2	7

Respecting the account of expenses given by Mr. Fish, the following evidence has been given by Mr. Breeze:

"Respecting the outgoings of the weaver on account of his work, I would remark, that a weaver who pays for twisting-in thereby proves that he has not properly learnt his business; if he employ another man to twist in, he must himself be idle all that time. The shilling a week for winding applies to bandanas. A man who has to pay 1*s.* 6*d.* a week for winding the bombazines, must do work enough to earn 18*s.* wages. At the rate of wages given by me, 1*s.* a week for winding would be sufficient."

 "*Q.* Do

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"*Q.* Do you consider the deduction made for extra rent to be correct?—*A.* If a weaver were to live comfortably, he would have to pay more than the sum stated; but not one out of seven does pay any more, that he may render his home comfortable, and accordingly the 6*d.* is not expended. I am bound to say, however, that the weavers in general do not crowd their children into the same room with themselves, so as to violate propriety; they make every arrangement that their humble circumstances will allow.

"Is there any other remark which you wish to make?—I would remark that the weaver is not put to so much expense as a bricklayer or a carpenter for clothes and shoes; the weaver may get up and put his feet in slippers, and he may wear at the loom clothes in which a respectable working man could not be seen in the streets. This is a point to his advantage; he is also secured from the rain and severe weather."

With a view to comparison with the weavers, inquiry was made as to the wages of some other workmen. According to Mr. Dodshon Blake, the wages of a bricklayer at Norwich are from 2*s.* 6*d.* to 3*s.*, the latter sum being the extreme; the wages of a bricklayer's labourer are from 1*s.* 8*d.* to 2*s.* a day. The wages of a carpenter are from 3*s.* to 3*s.* 6*d.* a day. The hours of working are from six to six, two hours being allowed out of this time for their meals.

Of the Facility of acquiring the Art of Weaving.

The art of weaving the fabrics made at Norwich is not more difficult to acquire than that of weaving the fabrics of Spitalfields. "If weavers are wanted," says Mr. Hastings, "they may be struck into existence in a month; some branches may be done by boys and girls, and what may done by a boy can never reach above a boy's wages."

Mr. Spalding gives the following evidence:

"*Q.* What, in your opinion, are the causes of so many people being weavers?—*A.* Our trade is too easily learnt. A girl in good health, at 16, can do as well as a man at all our light fabrics. Another cause is the carelessness of the parents to the ultimate good of their children; when they put them to the loom, they gain by them the first two or three years. I have a girl of 14, who can earn at some fabrics as much as I can; I have a boy of 12, also weaving. Such earnings are a great inducement to parents, but it is injurious in the long run."

When there is a great demand for goods, the men who have been working at less difficult fabrics are set to do the finer goods; and for the lower and coarser fabrics, men and women from any other employment can be put to the loom, and soon manage to do their work passably well.

Hence it is, that at times when there is a great demand for goods, if agricultural labourers be unemployed, there is a great influx into the weavers' trade in the villages of Norfolk, by persons of whom the regular weavers of Norwich make great complaints. These persons, it is true, are not completely master of all parts of their trade, and Mr. Athow calls them shuttle-throwers, and not weavers; still, such parts as they cannot do themselves they get others to do for them, and they manage to do all the rest of their work.

Of the Hours of Work.

The hours of labour at Norwich are not represented as severe; long hours would be impossible with their present ground of complaint, which is not lowness of the rate of payment, but want of employment. Occasionally extraordinary labour will be performed. It is not now usual for the masters to make an advance of money to their weavers, and consequently, when a piece is nearly completed, a weaver will work a great many hours, and even beyond his strength, in order to be able to take home his piece and receive his wages upon it.

Mr. Hastings states, that the usual time employed every day by a Norwich weaver is about eight hours; a weaver will take an hour to breakfast, and an hour and a half to dinner. Mr. Hastings was accustomed to take to his meals

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an hour three times a day. He thinks that he has observed that a hard-working weaver lives longer than the rest.

There are some of the fabrics of Norwich which differ sufficiently from the rest to require a special notice respecting them, in addition to the particulars which have already been stated; these are, the camlets, the gauze, crapes, and the fillover shawls, borders and scarfs. Of these fabrics separately an account is now offered.

Of the Norwich Camlet Weavers.

In addition to the valuable information given by Mr. Stark in his account of the manufactures of Norwich, Mr. John Warden Robberds has given additional particulars.

The trade in camlets with the Spanish colonies in North and South America very much fell off as soon as they became independent. The trade to China was partly injured by the Americans, before the expiration of the East India Company's charter; and after that event and the trade was thrown open, the people of Yorkshire overstocked the market, in consequence of which prices very much fell, and camlets could not be made to advantage until prices again rose. Hence for about twelve months past, there had been very little camlet weaving in Norwich.

There are three descriptions of camlets; second single, fine single, and double.

The warp of all the three is double worsted thread, but the shute of the fine single and second single is single thread. The Yorkshire camlet weavers are accused of marking their camlets with D., indicating that they were double, whilst nevertheless they were only single, thereby committing a fraud on the buyer, as well as unfairly taking away the trade of the Norwich manufacturer. The price of weaving in Yorkshire for a piece of 55 yards, worth 4*l.* 10*s.*, was considered by Mr. Robberds 12*s.*, whilst in Norwich it would be 23*s.* It is obvious that with so great a difference as 11*s.* on an article not worth more than 90*s.*, the Norwich manufacturer cannot meet his northern competitors; and it will be easy for a Yorkshire manufacturer, if he should so think fit, to put as good a material into his camlets as a Norwich manufacturer, and still with this difference of 11*s.* per piece in his favour be able to undersell in the market. Attempts have been made to explain this state of things to the men, but altogether without effect. They refuse to be convinced of their own interest, and will not see that by holding out for a rate of wages which cannot be paid, they must lose their employment altogether.

Of Crape Gauze Weavers.

The great firm of Grout, Ringer, Martin & Co., have an establishment at Norwich, in which in April 1838 there were 970 hands employed. In the establishment belonging to this firm at Yarmouth, 1,100 hands were then employed, and 560 at another establishment at Bungay. In September 1838 the number employed was much increased. The establishment at Norwich is the centre, and head quarters for the three. The firm purchase the raw silk, throw it, dye it, and perform every necessary operation; there are workmen of every description necessary to make the machinery required.

In the weaving department there were 24 men employed, and 386 women; of the latter, 65 attended and worked in a shop in the factory, and the rest worked at their own habitations. The average wages of the men was ascertained for the purposes of this inquiry to be 14*s.* 10*d.* a week; of the women working at home 4*s.* a week, and of the women working at the looms in the factory, 5*s.* 5*d.* a week: these have to find their own lights. The lower average of the wages of the women working at home is, in a considerable degree, attributable to the circumstance that many of them are married women, and their time is partly occupied by their domestic duties. Six of them had earned on the average in 1837 as much as 7*s.* 0¾*d.* a week, other six averaged only 1*s.* 9*d.* a week each.

The women weaving in the factory come at six in the morning, and leave at half-past seven in the evening; they have from half-past eight to nine to breakfast, from one to two to dinner, and 20 minutes to tea. Some go home to their

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meals, others take their meals on the factory premises. The women attend very regularly, and carry on their work in silence.

Respecting the wages and the work generally, Mr. Martin gave the following evidence:

"The work is very light, and does not require any severe labour; and our system is to afford regular and constant employment. Our people never have to wait between one piece and another, and never have to wait a moment for shute. In our factory we 'beam-on' ourselves, and we have the beams with the warp thus 'beamed-on' standing ready; and we have a box of quills, with the shute upon them, ready wound: the beam and the shute are delivered out together. There is no such thing in our work as the weaver 'playing for a cane;' there is no lost time whatever. If the trade were such that we could not go on making to the same extent as we had done, we should set the weaver free altogether from us; but frequently, when the sales are slack, we keep making goods, and lay in a stock to keep our hands engaged. In making this arrangement we have no lost time; we study our own advantage; we get our work done in consequence at a cheaper rate per piece, and our weavers at the same time earn more, take the year all round, than if they were paid higher, but had to play for cane or shute; employer and employed both profit by the arrangement. About two years ago Norwich was very flourishing, and higher wages might have been got than what we were giving, but very few of our hands left us; they saw that the steady, regular employment, without play, which we gave them, was more beneficial than higher wages for a time, subject to uncertainty. This system subjects us to the necessity, at times, of accumulating goods, and at times we lose by them; but we are thus able to keep our hands together, and on the whole it is to our advantage."

Mr. Martin conducted the Assistant Commissioner to all parts of his factory. The neatness, indeed elegance, cleanliness, and comfort of every part, were highly gratifying to see. It was on a Monday morning, and the women and young girls were all in clean attire; they seemed healthy and cheerful, and, what was unexpected, there was no talking. In the weaving-room, one man presided over 65 women; they used the fly-shuttle. At the ware-room the foreman stated, that for the last five years not above 20 people had ever had to wait for a cane, and these not over a day and a half at most. Several out-door females, who had come with their work, were asked if they ever had to play for their work; and they stated, one and all, that they had not lost a day by play for many years past.

In the following September, the number of females employed by this firm in weaving gauze was 149, as was ascertained in taking the census of the weavers.

Of the Fillover Weavers.

An account of the fillover weaving is given in the description and history of the Norwich manufactures by Mr. William Stark. Two operatives in this branch, Mr. James Bird and Mr. Benjamin Walker, came to give their evidence respecting it.

The fillover loom is so called, because in the weaving the face of the shawl is downwards, and all the work composing the figure is filled over it. The usual breadth of a fillover loom is seven or eight quarters, that is, 63 or 72 inches; but there are fillover looms not wider than six quarters; and there are two in Norwich, used for weaving ladies' scarfs, as wide as 14 quarters, or 10 ½ feet.

The fillover looms are employed for making shawls, borders of shawls, ladies' scarfs, and other ornamental fabrics. The work is too laborious for a woman, with very rare exceptions.

There is a great deal of time consumed in preparing a loom for a new pattern, and the pattern may not be long in favour, from the ever-varying caprice of fashion; and as the weaver is paid only for what he weaves, and not for the time occupied in preparing his loom, there is a great diminution to his earnings thereby occasioned. Of this one of the witnesses most vehemently complained; but confessed that the caprice of women, and the course of fashion, were both beyond the control of legislation.

Every

Every fillover weaver must employ a boy or girl to wind his quills; and must also have a tire-boy, or drawer, who must be a strong, well-grown youth, or a young man, whose business is to pull certain bunches of cords, which raise certain threads of the warp, after every motion of the shuttle, in order to compose the figure. It is the adjusting of this tackling, at the change of every pattern, which occupies time. The tire-boy is most important to the weaver, and there is much time lost in teaching him; and he is often induced, after being taught, to go to another weaver; and further, the tire-boys are complained of as having the audacity to jump into the looms, and become weavers, and thereby reduce wages.

The tire-boys receive, on the average, about 6*s.* 6*d.* a week.

The earnings of a fillover weaver are greater than those of another weaver. The usual price is 3*s.* 9*d.* for every 9,000 shoots, that is, for every 9,000 times that he makes his shuttle fly across the web, drawing a thread after it; in 1825 7*s.* were paid for the same work.

The following account of the weekly expenses of a fillover weaver, working a loom seven quarters broad, was given in by Mr. Fish, the secretary of the Norwich weavers' union:

	£.	s.	d.
Shoppage	–	2	6
Tire-boy	–	6	6
Winder	–	2	3
Candles	–	–	9
Beaming and twisting	–	–	8
Various tackle	–	–	4
Coals	–	–	2
£.	–	13	2

The weaver, from whose books this account was stated to be taken, is also stated to have earned, in 26 days, 5*l.* 4*s.* 0¾*d.*, and, deducting four weeks' expenses, the net earnings are 2*l.* 11*s.* 4¾*d.*, or 12*s.* 10*d.* a week.

Much complaint was made of occasional want of employment.

Of Parochial Assistance.

The city of Norwich is not under the Commissioners of the Poor Laws. The corporation of the guardians of the poor in Norwich is chosen under the authority of an Act, which received the Royal Assent on the 23d August 1831. The burden of the poor-rates was felt to be very heavy, and the number of applicants for relief was excessive. In 1830, the number of weavers under relief was 961. In 1833, a mode of testing the real necessities of the applicants was adopted, which was to fit up a room with about 90 looms in it, and, instead of giving relief for nothing, as in the former way, to give the weavers leave to come and work in this shop, receiving pay for the produce of their labour; but only on such a scale of pay as would leave it clearly their interest to keep away, and work for a manufacturer, if they could get anything to do.

Mr. Alderman Athow, Mr. Wilson, the cashier and accountant of the guardians, and Mr. Edmund Hastings, agree in their evidence that this test had a most wonderful effect. Mr. Hastings, who is now the warehouseman to Messrs. Shickle, Towler, Campin & Co., was then a weaver, and was employed by the guardians to introduce this system into the workhouse, says, "One man (I tell you his name, but I do not wish it published) had been on the corporation more or less for two-thirds of his time, for the preceding seven years: when at work he got from 8*s.* to 9*s.*; when he was set to work at the guardians' office, and was paid by the day, he did nothing at all. I proposed to put the people to task-work; he took offence, and applied to the mayor, and seeing that that did him no good, he left the guardians' office, and from that time he never applied, whilst I was there, to the guardians at all. He is a fair workman, and can live without getting other people's labour, and he has done so ever since; so I do not wish to publish his name. I will give another case: A man at a warehouse, who had never attempted to weave, was out of employment, and I set him to weave; he soon earned 10*s.* a week at the looms at the workhouse; he worked two to the others one. I recommended him to good work, and he

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now gets 20*s.* a week, and lives respectably. The poor laws have done a great deal of good, and so appears to every man who takes a right view of the case. I was two years at the workhouse."

The difference of the amount of work, when paid for by the day and when paid for by the piece, was very astonishing.

Mr. Hastings states:

"At first the men, before being at piece-work, could not get a piece done in a fortnight; I taught a boy to weave, and he did a piece in four days; that effectually put down their attempts at imposition."

The weavers in the guardians' shop are employed on coarse cotton goods, so as not to interfere with the fabrics of the place. The price paid to them is 5*s.* per piece, for the same work which is paid 3*s.* 4*d.* in Manchester. The guardians therefore lose on the work, but then it is invaluable as a test.

Mr. Henry Willett gives a curious statement of the calculations of the weavers under the old system: "I have had weavers who, at my warehouse, have, in my hearing, calculated whether it was better to take an article by which they might earn 10*s.* a week, or obtain parochial relief. They have come to the conclusion, that, having several children, they should be as well off with the parish allowance and the little money which they could earn on the market-days, as they would with the work offered them, and have in consequence declined to take it."

Mr. Alderman Athow and Mr. Wilson state, that whenever it becomes known that the guardians are without raw material, immediately they are beset by a multitude of applicants, but as soon as the cotton arrives, and they offer them work in the shop, immediately the multitude vanishes. Mr. Nicholls and Mr. Mann state, that in a time of slackness of trade, applications for medical relief as a step towards obtaining pecuniary relief were very numerous.

In the month of April 1838, the number of weavers at work in the shop was 84, and there were six unoccupied looms. Mr. Alderman Athow and Mr. Hastings say, that although there might be 84 who had leave to come to work, yet that the men did not work there all the week; when they had work from a manufacturer, but not sufficient to occupy all their time, they would come to the guardians' shop to fill up their spare time, and make something by it. In the course of the last winter, there were at one time not only as many weavers as occupied all the looms, but also 70 more who were set to clean the streets; these 70 were allowed to earn per week from the guardians 1*s.* for every member of their families; there were other applicants who were not deemed proper objects of relief.

Mr. Hastings states, that there were in former days great abuses in the administration of relief, particularly when the applicants were freemen. It is very true that the acceptance of parochial relief was a legal disqualification, and forfeited the right of voting, but neither of the two parties into which Norwich has long been divided ever took objection; it would have been unpopular to do so, and in this matter as in every other, both parties were so bad, that it was utterly impossible that the one could be worse than the other.

Of the Physical Condition of the Weavers.

The men and women of Norfolk are an exceedingly fine race, probably not surpassed by any in the world; Norwich is most favourably situate for health, there is much elevated ground sloping down to the river, which flows through the city. The buildings are spread over a large space, the ground is a deep bed of gravel over a substratum of chalk. Nothing can be better. The city is in a plentiful, well-cultivated country, producing an abundance of provisions of the best quality. There is a fresh and healthy appearance in the complexions of the working people; of all these advantages the weavers participate, and as a body, generally, their physical condition appears better than that of the weavers of London.

There are however effects produced on the human constitution by the operation of weaving which may be partially mitigated, but cannot be totally obviated by any situation whatever. Hence we find in the medical evidence of Norwich the same characteristics as in Bethnal-green, but in a more moderate degree. There is one remarkable difference: there is no complaint of the perpetual

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petual prevalence of fever as in Bethnal-green, and this is to be attributed to the absence of those physical causes of disease which have been described as existing there in our Report respecting that place.

Mr. William Peter Nicholls, a member of the Royal College of Surgeons, in London, has for ten years been one of the surgeons gratuitously attending the guardians' dispensary and workhouse. The number of patients at the dispensary in 1837 was 5,040, which was about the usual average. By far the majority were weavers, or members of their families. Admission on the sick-list is a great step towards admission on the out-door relief list; and hence, in times of slackness of trade, there is a great increase of applications for medical relief. The prevalent diseases are dyspepsia and consumption, causing the usual symptoms of debility and indigestion. When fever occurs, it takes the typhoid form. Great care must be taken by the medical men not to reduce the strength. When bleeding is resorted to, leeches are preferred to the use of the lancet. From 7,000 to 8,000 leeches are annually consumed in the dispensary: these are bought at the rate of from 8*s.* to 9*s.* 6*d.* per hundred. The children inherit the feeble constitution of their parents, and, when diseases break out, there is a greater mortality amongst them. Take them in general, the weavers, after a generation or two, are weaker and smaller in stature than other men. Mr. Nicholls went with a recruiting officer some little time ago to the workhouse; several weavers most honourably came forward to offer themselves to fight for their country, but they were all objected to on account of their size.

The females of the weaving population suffer more than other females from the diseases peculiar to the sex.

In some of the new parts in the suburbs, the streets and houses are little better than in Bethnal-green; but there is better air, as the extent which the houses cover is comparatively small.

Mr. Robert James Mann, of the University College, London, who had attended the Norwich guardians' dispensary three years and a half as a student, gave his evidence in London about a month before the evidence of Mr. Nicholls was received. There is a most complete coincidence throughout; from which it may be inferred that the facts stated are clear and undoubted, and obvious to every medical practitioner.

On the Moral Condition of the Weavers.

The city of Norwich is most abundantly supplied with means of religious instruction. There are about 36 parish churches, besides the cathedral, and there are many dissenting meeting-houses. Some of the churches are but thinly attended; but then, on the other hand, there are churches where there are crowded congregations. On the Sabbath-day, the people in general attend Divine worship. There is no excuse, as in Bethnal-green, from the want of proper clothing. The whole population is on that day well clad, the women more particularly. There is no voluntary working at the loom on Sundays; such a thing would be held to be quite disgraceful. The weavers complained that occasionally the manufacturers did, in fact, though not in words, compel the weavers to work on Sundays, when an order was received which required expedition.

Mr. Samuel Fish, and a deputation of weavers, gave evidence as follows:

"*Q.* The manufacturer can hardly be so indecent as to order the weaver to work on Sunday?—*A.* No, he will not mention Sunday; but he will order it to be done by a certain time; and he must know that, if the weaver do not work on Sunday, he cannot get through the work.

"Do many weavers voluntarily work on Sundays?—It is reckoned quite disgraceful to do so: in cases like what has been mentioned, it is not voluntary, but forced work."

But in all large towns there are sad exceptions to the general good conduct of the majority, and such is the case at Norwich. Mr. Geary states:—

"I fear that if we search the deep recesses of our yard, court, and alley population, we shall find many who do not go to public worship. Not long ago, ten

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houses were visited by a member of my family, and only one old man out of the whole was found preparing to go.

"*Q.* The working population seen in the streets on Sundays are decently dressed?—*A.* That is very true; but we cannot infer from that either the piety or morality of the people; both I fear are at a very low ebb.

"To what extent does drunkenness prevail?—I consider it to prevail much less than in most places of the same population; and indeed much less than in most places of not nearly so large a population."

Very religious men, like Mr. Geary, form in their own minds a very severe standard as to religion and morals; but it is very satisfactory to find the external indications of religion so many, and the grounds of exception so few; and all in all, as compared with other places, Norwich must be considered as occupying a high position.

No evidence has been given from which we might prove the existence of prudence and frugality in the body of the weavers. None of them ever spoke of their past savings as a resource in time of want of employment. Mr. Spalding says, "Very few save anything at all; they spend as they get; and hence are in great distress in play-time." The information obtained at the savings banks is, that very few indeed ever deposit money there. The superintendent believes that there never were 20 weavers who deposited money there. This seems to be quite conclusive on the subject.

On the Intellectual Condition of the Weavers.

There is a mechanics' institution at Norwich, the members of which, according to Mr. Samuel Daynes, in April 1838, were 130 in number. The expense is 10*s.* a year, or 3*s.* a quarter during the two winter quarters, and 2*s.* a quarter during the summer quarters. The number of weavers belonging to the institution in the preceding quarter was only six; but in consequence of the institution having undertaken to debate the question whether there ought to be a fixed rate of wages or not, some additional members had joined from the weavers for the quarter. It is evident this institution can do but little towards enlightening the working classes of Norwich, as so few belong to it.

There is a penny library, so called from the subscription being 1*d.* a week, and it is considered to do good. The members are said to be about 200.

According to Mr. Daynes, the favourite authorities on political economy are the works of the Rev. Dr. Wade and the newspapers. The papers of their own town, from what I saw of them, will do them no harm; but on the science of political economy, from the intercourse which I had with the weavers, I consider they have but very little knowledge. The deputations who came to give evidence were men who commanded respect from their talents and shrewdness, but their acquirements fell very far short of their natural powers of understanding.

Mr. William Stark, F.G.S., has had the opportunity of seeing some of the best of the mechanics and weavers, and he has known some who have made acquirements in general science, and in a knowledge of astronomy and mathematical sciences. Formerly the weavers were fond of flowers, and every one had a little garden, if possible. This is now no more the case, and the alleged excuse uniformly is poverty. Like their brethren of Spitalfields, the weavers of Norwich were fanciers of pigeons and singing birds; but in both places the fancy seems alike to have fallen off. The general improvement is much retarded by politics. "The spirit of party politics," says Mr. Stark, "is carried to such an extent here as to be totally destructive to the morals and to the intellectual acquirements of the working population."

Much good, however, appears to have been done by the circulation of cheap periodical papers, unconnected altogether with party and with politics, such as the Penny Magazine and Chambers's Journal. On this subject Mr. Stark gives most decided evidence:

"*Q.* Do you think they have improved or become worse within the last 20 years?—*A.* I should say decidedly improved; and I mean this answer to apply to

to the working classes generally of this place. I have had for many years a considerable number of men in the establishments to which I have belonged, and am still connected, and I have observed a decided, and I think progressive, improvement in their habits and morals. Formerly they were great drinkers, and the losses and annoyances I, amongst many others, have suffered from the conduct of workmen, at the time to which I allude, were great indeed. There is little or nothing of the kind now, and I attribute much of this reformation to the cheap and excellent publications which I have before named, as being the great instruments in effecting this good. I say this, from frequently observing my own men, as well as other workmen (amongst whom I am occasionally), reading these works; and even at the time allowed them for meals, I frequently see them with the Penny Magazine or Chambers's Journal, or such like books, in their hands, when formerly there was nothing but pots of beer. I sometimes also hear them discussing the contents of these books. Indeed their conduct in every respect is improved, and I attribute the improvement mainly to the cause I have named; for I have found, in the course of a tolerably long experience, that workmen generally have been well-behaved, industrious and valuable, as servants, in proportion to the extent of their mental cultivation. I believe that were new cheap publications issued on sound principles of political economy, written in a popular form, and within the comprehension of the working classes generally, much greater good would be effected."

Such evidence, from so competent an authority, of the beneficial result of even a moderate degree of intellectual cultivation is most gratifying.

Mr. Philip Breeze gives evidence corroborative of that of Mr. Stark respecting the improvement of the weavers. He says,

"I consider the moral condition of the weavers to have greatly improved during the last 40 years. As far back as that time there was enormous drinking.

"*Q.* Is not that improvement the result of not having money wherewith to drink?—*A.* That is not the cause. The more wretched a weaver is, the more is he likely to drink when he can. But when wages are good a weaver can command other comforts, and he does not seek to drown his sorrows in liquor.

"Are the weavers improved in their dress?—They have improved very much in that respect. On the Sundays they appear very respectably dressed. The female members of their families dress very neatly. The Manchester goods are cheap, and the greater part are clothed in them; they cannot afford to wear the costly produce of our own town."

Of the Education of the Children of the Working Classes.

On taking a general view of the day-schools and Sunday-schools in the city of Norwich, the first impression would naturally be, that there were abundant means of education, and it might be supposed that the children were generally instructed; but if closer attention be paid, and the numbers be cast up, and the children attending the day-schools be separated from those who attend only Sunday-schools, it will be seen that the number falls greatly short of what would be required for a population of 61,110 in 1831, and now probably little less than 70,000 people.

This opinion will be confirmed by the evidence of Mr. William Geary, a gentleman distinguished for his zeal in support of religion and education, and who has established two day-schools, one for boys, and the other for girls.

Every gentleman to whom Mr. Geary's account was stated, said, that no man was better acquainted with the subject, and that every thing from him might be fully relied upon as correct.

"*Q.* From the researches which you have made, what is your opinion as to the extent of education amongst the children of the weavers?—*A.* In general the children of the working classes have received only an imperfect education, and many no education at all; I believe that there is one-third which can neither read nor write at all. Of this third, some go to Sunday-schools, and try to learn a little, but some do not even do so much as that. There is another third part which has been a little at school, and can spell and stumble through a chapter of the Testament, and that with some difficulty. The other third can read and write, and with a good deal of trouble can make a calculation not

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requiring more than an operation in the first four rules. Of those children who do not read at all, the parents will make weak excuses, but some will allege of those farther advanced in life, that they will take their own course, and they cannot help it.

"At what time does parental authority cease to be imperative?—It is a common case, though not universal, that it is at a very early age. This partly arises from a most unfortunate and very common practice of putting the children on their own earnings as soon as possible. As soon as a child can earn a sum sufficient for its maintenance, the parent charges the child for lodging, for food, and for clothes; in fact, the child gets nothing except what can be purchased out of its own earnings.

"The great evil is, the circumstance that a child thus treated immediately becomes independent of the parents. The child considers that as he lives upon his own earnings, he may do it in any other house as well as in that of his father. Hence he will leave his father's house, and go and lodge at another house, and provide for himself there: the consequence is, the loss of parental power. The child is left to the ways of his own heart, and that at an age when the authority of a parent is most of all desirable. I know of many such cases, and I greatly fear that the amount much surpasses the number which I know. The authority over those who still remain with their parents is very slight, as the children and parents both feel that there is nothing to support it. It is fearful to think that children at 12 or 13 should be left to themselves."

Of the schools in Norwich in connexion with the Established Church, the Rev. Samuel Stone, in April last, was so good as to collect information, which is exhibited in the following Table.

Day Schools.

	Weekly Pay.	Daily.		Additional on Sundays.	
		Boys.	Girls.	Boys.	Girls.
	d.				
Old charity-school, St. Peter's, Mancroft	3	146	—		
Central schools	1	136	87	20	—
St. James' schools	1	130	120	40	40
St. Martin's-at-Oak school	1	116	90	6	60
St. Julian's schools	1	113	83	26	20
St. Stephen's schools	2	105	60	6	—
St. Gregory's schools	2	121	90	-	10
St. Clement's school	-	-	65	—	
St. Edmund's school	-	-	25	-	10
Schools near St. Augustine's Gate	2	40	60	—	
		907	680	98	140

In addition are three schools in which the sexes were not distinguished.

	Daily.	Additional on Sundays.
Heigham	60	20
St. Swithin's	95	5
St. Helen's	60	20
	215	65

Distributing these in the same proportion as the others, we have	123	92	19	26
	1,030	772	117	166
	772		166	
	1,802		283	

Infant Schools.

	Weekly Payments.	
Schools near St. Augustine's Gate	2*d.*	150 boys and girls.
St. Andrew's infant schools	2*d.*	100 boys and girls.

Sunday Schools.

	Boys.	Girls.
St. Augustine's	19	17
St. Andrew's	-	68
Heigham, Union-place	-	120
St. John's, Madder-market	35	—
St. Clement's	25	—
Ditto	-	75
St. Peter's, Southgate	-	70
	79	350
Attending day-schools as already enumerated	117	166
	196	516
	516	
St. Saviour's boys and girls	46	
Lakenham ditto	100	
	858	

There are also Sunday-schools, of which the number of pupils is not stated; for girls, in St. John's, Madder-market, St. Simon's, and St. Mary's; and for boys, in St. Martin's at-Oak; and for boys and girls, in St. John Sepulchre, and St. Giles. Most of the children attending the day-schools also attend at them on the Sunday.

Mr. Stone remarks, in the letter communicating this information, that the winter season of the year was not so favourable as to numbers as the summer, which is obvious. The returns of the Sunday-schools are clearly very imperfect.

In the course of the summer, Mr. John Withers Dowson kindly supplied the following Table:

Dissenters' Day Schools in Norwich.

	Number of Boys.	Number of Girls.	Payment per Week.	Connexion.
			d.	
Lancasterian schools (2)	265	100	1	Dissenters generally.
Octagon chapel (2)	50	80	1	Unitarians.
Old Meeting	27	-	1	Independents.
Raven-yard	60	-	2	Dissenters generally.
	402	180		
Infant Schools.				
Lakenham	113	87	2	Dissenters generally.
Union-place	97	90	1	—
Pockthorpe (about)	80	80	1	—
St. Michael's	60	45	2	—
	350	302		

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SUNDAY SCHOOLS.

—	Number of Boys.	Number of Girls.	Payment per Week.	Connexion.
			d.	
Prince's-street chapel	166	131	none.	Independents.
Old Meeting	110	70	—	—
King-street	65	75	—	—
Trowse chapel	62	92	—	—
Tombland chapel	20	32	—	—
St. Mary's	81	50	—	Baptists.
St. Clement's	67	69	—	—
Orford-hill chapel	179	167	—	—
Providence	17	14	—	—
Priory-yard	128	116	—	General.
Tabernacle	52	62	—	Lady Huntingdon's.
Sprowston	39	42	—	—
Octagon	90	60	—	Unitarians.
St. Paul's	109	113	—	Wesleyan Methodists.
Cattan	65	70	—	—
Heigham	62	58	—	—
St. Peter's	72	55	—	—
Lakenham	59	75	—	—
New City	100	127	—	—
Catton	38	27	—	—
St. Catharine's	42	40	—	Primitive.
Ber-street	24	43	—	—
New-road	14	33	—	—
Ebenezer	64	64	—	New connexion.
Barn-road	33	29	—	—
Silver-street	120	136	—	Union.
	1,878	1,850		

There is a remarkable contrast between the Sunday-schools of the Church and the Sunday-schools of the Dissenters, and between the day and Sunday-schools of the Dissenters. Mr. Dowson's table most fully proves, on the part of the Dissenters, a great zeal to afford a knowledge of reading and religious instruction, which is nearly all that Sunday-schools can undertake to supply. One of the infant schools deserves a special notice.

NEW CITY INFANT SCHOOL.

This school, as its name implies, is situated in a district called the New City, in the street called Union-place. The room is large, airy, and well lighted, and there is a spacious play-ground, which are requisites to a successful infant school. The institution had a grant of 100*l.* from Government; but it is chiefly indebted for its establishment and continuance to the generous liberality and constant care of Mr. Bolingbroke, a manufacturer. The children seemed exceedingly happy, and that is the best criterion to try the merits of an infant school; the chief objects to be attained are kindly, social feelings towards each other, and that is incompatible with tyrannical oppression. When this school was visited, Mrs. Bolingbroke was in the room; the children went through their usual exercises, and they afterwards marched round the room, and round the play-ground, in excellent order, and singing a lively tune in loud and exhilirating intonations of voice. On their return they seated themselves in a gallery.

The school appears to be a model of its kind, and to effect all the good of which such an institution is capable. Mr. Bolingbroke gave a very favourable account of the infant school at Lakenham.

There is another school in Norwich which requires special notice.

Catholic School, Ten-Bell Lane.

This school is important as an instance how easily the children of parents of different religious principles may be taught together. Catholic and Protestant children here sit side by side, in perfect harmony; the Catholic child reads the Douay Bible, and the Protestant child reads the authorized version; the children of the Catholics learn the Catholic catechism, and the children of the Protestants learn the catechism of the Prayer-book; and matters go peaceably on. The number of boys on the books is 47, and of girls 45; of course the number present is always less.

There is another Catholic school in Norwich, of about the same size, and on the same plan.

The children are taught reading, writing, and arithmetic, and receive religious instruction, as has already been stated.

Most happily for the city and diocese of Norwich, and, it may be added, for the country generally, the Right Reverend the Lord Bishop of Norwich takes a very high interest in the subject of education, and is now engaged in collecting data to enable him to show the statistics of education, not only in the city and suburbs of Norwich, but also throughout the whole of the diocese. The difficulties are very great; but when overcome, and the object accomplished, the result will give a view of the amount of education, both in towns and rural districts, such as England does not possess at present; and the publication of which cannot fail to be a great public good. From many of the masters of the schools in Norwich his Lordship has received returns, certified by them as correct, under their own hands. A copy of a table, framed from such returns, his Lordship was so good as to communicate in September last; it is as follows:

Schools in Norwich.

	Oldest.	Youngest.	Boys.	Girls.	Total.
St. Andrew's Infant School	8 ½ years	1 ¾ years	72	60	132
St. Andrew's (Girls)	13 –	6 –	– –	97	97
St. Andrew's (Boys)	14 –	6 –	112	– –	112
St. Augustine's, Infants	7 –	1 ½ –	161	84	245
St. Augustine's Upper School	14 –	7 –	120	105	225
St. Augustine's Evening School	– –	– –	70	75	145
Crook's-place, Infant	8 –	1 ½ –	98	91	189
St. George's, Colegate	14 –	4 –	– –	65	65
St. Gregory's	12 –	4 –	127	115	242
St. Helen's	12 –	3 ½ –	31	39	70
Lakenham	13 –	2 ½ –	112	88	200
St. Martin-at-Palace, Lancasterian	13 –	4 –	67	90	157
St. Martin-at-Oak	14 –	5 –	265	– –	265
St. Miles'	12 –	2 –	96	60	156
St. Julian's	13 –	3 –	83	88	171
St. Paul's	12 –	4 –	175	165	340
St. Paul's, Dissenting	14 –	7 –	– –	100	100
St. Peter's, Mancroft	14 –	6 –	146	– –	146
Pockthorpe, Infant	7 –	1 ½ –	88	65	153
St. Stephen's	13 ½ –	2 ¾ –	– –	102	102

Of the general amount of education in the city of Norwich, Mr. Dowson concurs in the opinion of Mr. Geary already stated. He, however, thinks that the greater part of the working people of Norwich would send their children to be instructed, if there were more convenient schools, and he thinks that they would willingly pay 1 *d.* a week. Such a price is, however, quite inadequate to defray the expense of a building, and to pay the salary of a teacher, and, therefore, the schools cannot be supported at present without the aid of private benevolence.

In reply to the observation made to him, that under such circumstances the burden fell heavily on a few benevolent individuals, and the great multitude

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entirely escaped, and that without further means it was in vain to expect that education would be general, Mr. Dowson replies:

"*A.* Clearly not. I have long been of opinion that we must have recourse to a public fund, in fact to a school-rate, in order to obtain the means of education. I am far, however, from proposing that such a thing should be done as yet. The public must be prepared for it, but that is the end which we must keep in view, and as early as the public can be made to see the necessity of a public provision for education it must be attempted.

"*Q.* In the meantime, is there anything which you think ought to be recommended to the consideration of Government?—*A.* I think that a liberal grant of public money should be given to the two great educational societies, the National and the British, for the purpose of enabling these societies to educate teachers; that is a matter of the first national importance, and likely to be of the greatest utility, and I see no objection to its being immediately done."

With the opinion thus expressed by Mr. Dowson I entirely and heartily concur. The ultimate object must be kept in view, the universal education of the people, and the means by which such education can alone be effected. It is necessary, however, to enlighten the public mind on the subject, and mischief would arise from attempting to press forward faster than the public can be induced to follow.

NORFOLK.

Wymondham, and the Villages in the County of Norfolk.

Norfolk.

The trade of Norwich is not confined to the city and suburbs, but also extends out into the towns and villages of the county of Norfolk. A description of the condition of the weavers in these places will be necessary, in order to have a complete view of the circumstances which influence the condition of the weavers in Norwich. The first in importance of the towns and villages is Wymondham; and there are several villages both on the north side and south side of Norwich.

Wymondham, or Wyndham.

The town of Wymondham is about nine miles south from Norwich, and on one of the roads to London. The population in 1831 was 5,485. The part of the population depending on weaving was estimated by Mr. White, the assistant-overseer, at about a sixth part of the whole. A deputation of the weavers, Mr. John Smith, Mr. John Fiddimont, Mr. James Blazey, and Mr. Richard Foulsham, in April 1838, stated the number of looms to be about 300, of which 100 were employed by Mr. Tipple, the only manufacturer in the place; 100 by manufacturers in Norwich, and the others got work, they said, nobody knew where. Many weavers had left the town.

Mr. Smith is the son and grandson of a weaver. Early in life he was set to fill bobbins. In 1803, being twelve years of age, he took to weaving. He says, in his evidence,

"It was linen weaving. It was nothing strange to me; I was brought up to it. I took to it without being asked at all. I got through a piece of hemp cloth first, without spoiling it. In 12 months I was master of my business."

Mr. Smith then took to twills, diaper, huckabucks, all linen fabrics, and continued for 15 years, when the linen trade totally went down in Norfolk; there being now merely a remnant. The wages were 12*s.* a week, but latterly only 9*s.*

In 1819 he took to bombazines, the staple fabric of Norwich, and gained about 15*s.* a week; and so he continued for five years. In 1824 trade became slack; and after the panic of 1825 it became worse, and in 1826 worse still; and ever since that time there has not been employment, he says, for more than nine months in the year.

The

The rate paid for weaving was not reduced until 1829, and the weaver had suffered only by want of employment. In that year, the weavers found that work was given out, at a much less price than that paid in Norwich and Wymondham, to weavers in the villages all over the county; and, attributing to this cause their slackness of employment, they agreed, in concert with the weavers of Norwich, to a lower price; and they formed themselves into a union, which was to be an auxiliary to the Norwich Weavers' Union. The scale of prices then agreed to was 20 per cent. below the former scale, and it is that which the union in Norwich and Wymondham have maintained ever since.

Mr. Smith states his wages to be from 10 *s.* to 12 *s.* a week when employed; but he has obtained employment only nine months in the year. On making inquiry all round the town, he estimated that the average earnings in the present slack time amounted to only about 7 *s.* a loom per week, many having only half work, and some none at all. He did not think there were above 30 wives and daughters of weavers employed in weaving, and not so many boys. "A parent," he said, "tries to get his boy to anything rather than to weaving. There are no boys learning to weave now, nor have been for some time past. Anything is better than weaving. Some boys have taken to agricultural employment."

The other members of the deputation confirmed the evidence of Mr. Smith.

Mr. Richard Foulsham stated, that he had lately gone along with some others amongst the villages, to see what was going on. They found there the same fabric given out to be wove at 8 *d.* per dozen of hanks of shute, which by the scale of prices of the Union of the Norwich weavers ought to be at 1 *s.* The usual system he stated to be, that a man, called an "undertaker," brought the work out from Norwich, and nobody knew who were the manufacturers from whom he received it; and he got it done at as cheap a rate as he could. The difference between what the manufacturer allowed him, and the price for which he got it done, constituted his profit.

The following question and answer will show the ideas of the weavers of Wymondham, as to the remedy for their distress:

"*Q.* Now, what remedy have you and the other gentlemen thought of for all this distress?—*A.* The remedy is, a Wages protecting Act. Nothing but the interference of Government can be of any service. Every man should be made to pay alike for the same fabric. I do not want to press high wages, only let every man pay alike for the same work. Formerly the masters met together, and settled the wages, and held a meeting with the men. We must have a law to keep the dishonest men honest: it must be a general Act; a local Act would be of no use. It must extend all over the kingdom, but making proper allowance according to the circumstances of each particular place."

Mr. Jasper Howes Tipple is the only manufacturer residing in Wymondham. He formerly had from 400 to 500 looms employed, but in April 1838 he had only about 150, of which from 60 to 70 were on bombazines. The following extract from his evidence will show the state of the trade; and it is the more important, as the same facts and reasoning are equally applicable to the great trade of the city of Norwich, as to the trade of the town of Wymondham:

"*Q.* Will you state why you have diminished the number of your weavers?—*A.* Because I have been undersold by other manufacturers, and I lose by my work. We have paid more in this part of the country for bombazines, than the manufacturers in other parts of the kingdom. I have held out, endeavouring to support the Union prices. I am far from thinking them more than the men ought to receive. I have struggled hitherto, but things are now brought to such a situation, that I can continue to do so no longer. I must discontinue altogether, as I cannot afford to keep going on at a loss.

"Since I came into this town to-day, I have been informed of weavers who were working under the Union prices?—I have no doubt of it; I advised the weavers to select some of their own body to go round into the villages, and ascertain what was going on, and they did so. I have no doubt that they have told

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told you of the undertakers, who send the work round into the villages, where it is woven at prices which totally prevent us, who pay the Union prices, from coming into the market against them. Much disturbance has been occasioned in Norwich by this system, and some work was destroyed; but the system goes on, and we cannot stop it. I am sorry for it. I do not believe that taking 4*d.* a dozen off the weavers' wages causes one yard more to be sold. The price paid for bombazines is not in the least too high; but the price of bombazines is that which regulates all other articles, and makes the weaving of them too high, and thereby seriously injures the Norwich trade.

"Can you give an instance?—I can give a very striking one. The Scotch people introduced the mousseline-de-laine. It is a very handsome fabric. It pleased very much, and Manchester soon followed Glasgow. We attempted this fabric at Norwich and Wymondham, but when I went to London I found that the Scotch people sold their goods, beautifully printed and finished, for the same money that it cost us to bring them off the loom. Of course it was in vain to compete with them. Fabrics like these have seriously interfered with the Norwich fancy trade. When Manchester, with its power-looms, comes against us it is vain for us, on our present system, to attempt to oppose. We had Jacquard looms at work, but the cheap goods of Manchester cut up the trade. Our great difficulty, after all, is not the price which we pay for bombazines; but that bombazines regulate the price of every other fabric, and we are prevented introducing new articles, as we cannot do it at a profit. Till lately Norwich, Wymondham, and Kidderminster, were the only places in the kingdom where bombazines were made, but now they are also made in Yorkshire. The Yorkshiremen are taking the bombazines from us as we took them from Spitalfields. The York merinoes and silk goods are often worn instead of the bombazines, except in the case of mourning for a near relation. Paramattas are also worn, which is a fabric of silk warp like bombazines, but of worsted weft of a softer texture."

The moral condition of the weavers in the town of Wymondham is, on the whole, favourable. The Rev. George Jeckell, who has for 12 years been the curate of the parish, states that many of the weavers regularly attend public worship, and the others attend occasionally. The greater number of the children are brought to be named. Bibles and prayer-books are in general circulation. There is a branch of the British and Foreign Bible Society, and a religious tract society. There are but few instances of persons living together without having been lawfully married.

As to education the same reverend gentleman stated, that there were but few who did not learn to read; many learned to write, but not the majority. The means of education, however, appear to be limited. There is a national school, at which are about 100 boys and 70 girls, much too few for the children of the poor of so large a town. At the Sunday-school attached to the church are about 200 scholars, and about the same number at a school attached to a dissenting meeting. Marriages at an exceedingly early age had been common, but had not been so much so of late. It was not uncommon for children of 15 to leave their parents and take a "being" of their own, that is, a lodging, and live independently of their parents, which was highly injurious, as they were thus emancipated from authority at a time when they most of all required its restraints.

The town of Wymondham, and 23 other parishes, making the hundred of Forehoe, with a population of about 13,000, were incorporated long since into one union. In 1833 the Act was amended, and great good was the result, chiefly by getting rid of the interference of the magistrates. The union has since been brought under the new poor law.

Mr. James Coe White, the assistant-overseer, states that the applications for relief are now few in number, notwithstanding great distress, the able-bodied having learned by experience that there was no relief for them. In consequence of want of employment, and want of relief, the weavers were in a state of unparalleled distress. They are an improvident race of people. Very young persons do not hesitate to marry with little or no prospect before them. Many weavers had left the place. Some had gone to Norwich, some to London, and some to agricultural labour. The weavers were considered a source of misery to

to the town. In a time of prosperity they raised up a set of other poor tradesmen through their expenditure, and who, like the weavers themselves, were left in misery when the trade fell off. The condition of the weavers Mr. White considered much worse than that of the agricultural labourers. They were far more importunate in their demands for relief, and were always full of law, quoting Acts of Parliament, and putting their own meaning on them. Twenty agricultural labourers gave less trouble than one weaver. The weavers at Wymondham are worse than the shoemakers.

Intemperance was a usual frailty. There are 35 public-houses, and 15 beer-shops in the town.

Mr. Caudell Clarke, jun., is the secretary of the Wymondham Friendly Society. There are about 400 members, of whom about 100 are weavers, and there formerly were 150 weavers. This is not the only society in the town, although it has more members than all the others put together.

About 13 years ago, Mr. Caudell Clarke made a calculation, to see whether the agricultural labourers or the weavers received most from the society, and he found the following result:

	£.	s.	d.
Of 65 agricultural labourers, 18 had relief, amounting to	37	8	–
Of 81 weavers, 18 had relief, amounting to	32	10	–

Therefore the agricultural labourers received, one with another, 11 *s.* 6 *d.* per annum.
The weavers - - - - - - - - - 8 *s.* —

In the year made up of part of 1825 and part of 1826,

Of 88 agricultural labourers, 28 had relief, amounting to	62	16	–
Of 102 weavers, 33 had relief, amounting to	50	6	–

Therefore the agricultural labourers averaged - - 14 *s.* 3 *d.*
The weavers - - - - - - - - 9 *s.* 1 *d.*

In the year made up of part of 1826 and part of 1827,

Of 104 agricultural labourers, 37 had relief, amounting to	99	10	–
Of 110 weavers, 36 had relief, amounting to	62	–	–

Therefore the agricultural labourers averaged - - 19 *s.* 1 *d.*
The weavers - - - - - - - - 11 *s.* 2 *d.*

This result shows, most decidedly, that the weavers are not so long disabled from work on the average as the agricultural labourers, though this is partly to be accounted for by the circumstance of their work being more within doors, and requiring less strength.

Mr. Caudell Clarke gives the following account of a clothing society, which he considers very useful.

The plan is this: "A gentleman or lady subscribes half-a-crown, and gets a ticket and gives it to some working person, say a weaver, who thereby may become a member. The member must pay 1 *d.* a week, and then at the end of the year he may receive, in clothes, the value of what he has paid, being 4 *s.* 4 *d.*, and of the 2 *s.* 6 *d.*, and also of the interest from the savings bank. Some subscribers take out several tickets. Some members get more tickets than one, and pay the 1 *d.* a week on each ticket, and at the end of the year receive benefit accordingly. The members are thus put into a habit of providence and perseverance. They must continue to pay up, or they would lose the benefit of the ticket, and of what they had themselves paid. The clothes come very opportunely just before the coldest period of the year. The society is popular, and the demand for tickets increases."

Villages to the North of Norwich.

After hearing much in Norwich and Wymondham of the great amount of weaving sent to be done in the villages in Norfolk, there was a double interest in going to ascertain the real fact. The result showed, that work was sent to be done in the villages, and that it was through the medium of carriers from Norwich, and was done greatly below the list prices of the Union of Norwich weavers; but as to the amount of work, it was very far less than was supposed, and the weavers in the villages were in a worse condition than the weavers of Norwich.

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Marsham.

The weavers of Marsham, a village about nine miles north from Norwich, stated that about 20 years since they had been induced to leave agricultural labour, and take to the loom. They were then single, and had found great difficulty in getting employment from the farmers, and then only at less wages than the married men with families, and this they felt to be unjust. At that time the bombazine weaving at Norwich was very brisk; and when they took to weaving they were soon able to make 15*s.* a week. So things continued for several years; but upwards of 10 years ago they had been obliged to take work at less than the Norwich prices, and they had suffered reduction after reduction till now they could not earn above 6*s.* or 7*s.* a week, and that too with the assistance of their wives to wind their bobbins.

The number of looms in the village they stated to be about 80, of which one-half were unemployed. Some were engaged at bombazines, but the greater part at cotton bottoms and challis. They had suffered much last winter from long "play."

From whom the work came they knew not. They felt themselves to be outcasts. They had no master to whom to make their complaints, and when they went to the farmers to ask for work, the farmers told them that their own men had a preferable claim.

In case of severe sickness, assistance was got from the parish.

In other cases the usual plan was to send the weavers to dig clay, for which they were paid 1*d.* per solid yard, and the parish sold the clay to the farmers, who put it on their land, which was sandy. At digging clay they could earn from 3*s.* 6*d.* to 4*s.* 4*d.* a week. When any weaving was obtained, the parish would not allow them to set their wives and daughters to it, whilst they went on with digging, but immediately discharged them. They expressed regret at not being able to emigrate; but when it was proposed to them to make up a list of all who were willing to go abroad, they all shrunk back, and gave as an excuse, that they had heard unfavourable accounts of the weavers who had gone to Canada from the next parish, Hevingham.

Notwithstanding all the misfortunes of the trade, some of their sons and daughters were still trained to weaving.

They very earnestly requested that no inquiry should be made as to their names, lest the carrier should hear of them, and refuse them employment. He had warned them against the visit of a gentleman, who he said was going about the country in order to cause the cottages of the weavers to be assessed to the poor's-rate.

There was no resident clergyman at Marsham of whom inquiry could be made.

On a second visit to Marsham, Mr. John Howlett, the guardian of the poor for that parish, was at home. He is a large farmer. He said that the account given of their condition by the weavers, as far as he knew, was throughout correct. He had no reason to doubt respecting any part of it. The weavers were excused paying poor's-rate, on account of their poverty. At any time if he would give from 7*s.* to 9*s.* a week, the weavers would leave their regular employment, and come and work for him.

Hevingham.

In this parish information was received from the Rev. Edward Beevor, the clergyman, Mr. John Girling, a land-steward, Mr. Jeremiah Fish, the churchwarden, and also from John Willimott, a servant to the clergyman, who had till lately been a weaver.

The substance of the information was as follows:

There were about 120 looms in the parish, of which about half were employed. The weavers were better off than in Marsham, because they could get agricultural labour if they wished it, and a weaver might put his wife or daughter into the loom, and work himself in the fields. A landholder, residing in the parish, was making great improvements, which was the cause of there being so much agricultural

agricultural labour. The people of Marsham often sought for employment in Hevingham parish, and sometimes obtained it.

John Willimot, who had himself been a weaver, stated, that if a weaver could get full employment he could earn more than an agricultural labourer, but such was not the case. All parties agreed that the agricultural labourer was the better off of the two.

The work was brought by a carrier, and the names of the manufacturers were not known.

Horsham, St. Faith.

In this village, usually called, for shortness, St. Faith, situate four miles north from Norwich, inquiry was made of several weavers in April last, and in one house about a dozen of them collected. They said the looms in the village were 120, of which only about 30 were employed. The work was brought by a carrier, but from whom they knew not. They could not get any agricultural labour, and therefore were much worse off than the weavers of Hevingham.

The remedy they proposed was, that all the work done at St. Faith should be at the same price as the work done in Norwich. So little had they considered the subject that they did not see, that if such a law could be enforced no work whatever would be sent out to them.

The condition of the weavers of St. Faith, and the other villages on the north of Norwich, remained much the same in the following September. On inquiry at St. Faith the weavers stated, that some of them went to Norwich, and got work given to them, and for which work they were paid the regular Norwich prices; but the greater part got their work from the carriers, who gave much less. The villages of Hevingham and Marsham had their work from carriers. One of the weavers of St. Faith stated, with much self-congratulation, that he had never injured the trade by taking any part, during a busy time, in teaching cow-boys, unemployed labourers, and the refuse of other trades, the art of weaving; he said, that if the others had all done as he had done, there would not have been such a superabundance of hands beyond what could be employed.

In September last, inquiry was made respecting the condition of the weavers in some of the villages on the south side of Norwich, of which were two engaged in the usual Norwich fabrics.

Harlestone.

This is a town in the southern part of the county of Norfolk, and is one of those places to which work is sent by the manufacturers of Norwich, and of which the operatives are jealous. An agent resides here, and sees to the completion of the work. There is a large shop, or factory, with looms, and work is also distributed to be done in the cottages in the neighbouring villages.

The number of weavers is about 60, of whom 57 are women, nearly all unmarried, and only three are men. About 20 years ago there were many men; but most of them have gone to other employments, and no new men have taken to the trade for some years past. This is evidence unanswerable that the wages, as in other villages of Norfolk, are less that what is earned by an agricultural labourer. The women employed are chiefly the wives and daughters of labourers. The principal fabric is bombazines.

The shop is opened at six in the morning, and for half the year is shut when it becomes dark; after Michaelmas lights are used, and it is kept open till eight. The women are not prohibited from talking, and they come and go when they please. This is very different from the shops of Messrs. Grout, Ringer & Martin, at Norwich.

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Bunwell.

This place can scarcely be called a village, but there are many houses scattered about the roads; and the same is the case with some of the adjoining parishes. Work is brought out to be done by carriers. The distance from Norwich is about 12 miles.

There is no resident manufacturer, and the work is obtained from Norwich. Three weavers were examined; they were excessively afraid, and it was not without much reluctance that they admitted that they received their work from Norwich, and that they did not obtain the Norwich prices; but when they were told that weavers were wanted at Diss, and that 10*s.* a week net earnings might there be obtained, they expressed an intention to go to that place and make inquiry. On a little reflection, they attempted to explain this by saying that the work at Bunwell sometimes failed.

It was most evident that these men were under dread of the Norwich weavers' union.

For the purpose of comparison, inquiry was made as to the amount of the wages of agricultural labourers. I state the results respecting the neighbourhood of Norwich and Swaffham:

The wages of the agricultural labourer in the country adjacent to Norwich, are about the same as in the country about Colchester; a ploughman has 9*s.* a week, and some have 10*s.* The labourer is employed by the day, and is paid 1*s.* 8*d.*; which, if he were constantly employed, would be 10*s.* a week, but of course that is not the case with a man hired by the day: there is this remarkable difference, that no malt is allowed for the harvest, and the farmers allege that the labourers do as well without it. Threshers are paid 6*d.* or 8*d.* a coomb, and earn from 9*s.* to 10*s.* a week. Some gentlemen give beer to their labourers, others do not.

The labourers go about and collect money for the largess, or drink at the harvest supper. The farmer generally invites his friends to be present on the occasion. About midnight the labourers go outside and shout, Largess! largess! largess! after which they come in and collect money from the guests, which they spend next day in drinking at a public-house, and sometimes they get money enough to enable them for as much as two or three days to keep on drinking.

On inquiry, the wages about Swaffham were found to be as follows: a carpenter 2*s.* 6*d.* to 2*s.* 10*d.* a day, a bricklayer 2*s.* 6*d.* a day, a bricklayer's labourer 10*s.* 6*d.* a week and no beer.

The wages of farm labourers were 8*s.*, 9*s.* and 10*s.* a week; it was very rare for a man to get only 8*s.*, and 10*s.* were more usually paid than 9*s.*: some men at threshing by the piece could earn 14*s.* or 15*s.*

The sum paid for the harvest was 5*l.*, 5*l.* 10*s.* or 6*l.* with no beer, except what the gentleman or farmer chose to give.

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The Yarn Factory.—Violence of the Weavers.—Effects of the Violence of the Weavers.—Disunion amongst the Manufacturers.—Party Spirit.—The Police Force.—Administration of Justice.—Electioneering Abuses.

Having described the state of the weavers in the surrounding towns and villages, I now resume the Report on the city of Norwich.

Intimately connected with the prosperity or decay of any manufacturing town, is the subject of machinery. Of the difficulties which prevented the introduction of machinery into Norwich, some account is given in the history of the manufactures by Mr. Stark. It has, however, been effected in the case of certain operations not previously existing in the city, in the spinning of yarn, and the spinning and weaving of mohair. Of these establishments an account is now attempted.

The Yarn Factory.

The company which has built this factory was formed in 1833, and the operations of the factory commenced in 1834. Mr. Dodshon Blake, the manager, gives the following account of its design:

"Norwich and the neighbouring villages formerly had a great deal of long wool spun by the hand; but the erection of factories at Bradford, by which the same operation was done by machinery, both better and at a cheaper rate, caused the loss of this trade. The long wool of Norfolk was bought up by the Yorkshire manufacturers, and made into worsted yarn, and the Norwich manufacturers had to supply themselves from them. Under those circumstances it was considered that the establishment of a factory in Norwich would not only afford employment to a large number of people, but also be an advantageous investment of capital."

"*Q.* What number of hands do you employ?—*A.* Between 600 and 700 for the different operations. We buy the wool from the farmers of the surrounding country, who bring it to Norwich; after which we sort it, wash it, comb it, spin it, twist it, and fit it for use. We thus enable the Norwich manufacturer to obtain on the spot that of which he is in immediate want for the peculiar fabrics of the place. In addition to this convenience, the amount of wages to the workpeople does great benefit to the population. Our payment for wages may be about 14,000*l.* per annum."

The persons employed are chiefly between 13 and 18; but there are also a few full grown young women, and about 300 adult combers. There are very few children under 13, as by the Factory Act they cannot be employed above eight hours a day, which is inconvenient.

Another Yarn Factory.

On visiting Norwich in September it was found that another yarn factory had been commenced by one individual proprietor, who was said to have embarked 20,000*l.* in the speculation, and a favourable opinion was generally entertained as to its success.

The Mohair Factory.

This is situate at Lakenham, about a mile from Norwich. The material is the mohair or wool of the Angora goat, an animal abounding in Asia Minor, which is imported from Constantinople and Smyrna. The number of hands employed is about 300, chiefly from 13 to 18; and there are several adult women, and about 100 combers. The wages are said to amount to about 6,000*l.* a year. There are several power-looms. One boy or girl is required for each

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power-loom, and the work of each power-loom is about double that of the hand-loom. Some consider that the power-loom can do more; but Mr. Dodshon Blake states that, as far as he can judge, the above is very nearly the amount which can be regularly expected.

I have now to enter on the most unpleasant part of the whole of this Report, as it necessarily involves blame of the erroneous conduct of a numerous body of men, in many respects estimable. The object which the Norwich weavers' union have in view is most praiseworthy, the obtaining for themselves and their families such wages as may enable them to procure the necessaries and moderate comforts of life. But in attempting to effect this laudable object, they have been led into conduct which violates the rights of other men, and has been most injurious in its effects, both to the manufacturers and weavers of their city. It is exceedingly probable that the weavers themselves, in their zeal to effect what is a desirable object, may be insensible of the unjust nature of their conduct, and of its injurious effects; but it is not the less necessary on that account that a complete exposition should be made, and the measures which appear adapted to restrain improper conduct in future should be pointed out and recommended. This is what duty to the country, and more particularly to the city of Norwich itself, imperatively demands. I am now, therefore, under the necessity of making a full and candid Report of the violence of the weavers, the effects of the violence of the weavers, the disunion amongst the manufacturers, the party spirit which actuates the whole body of the people of Norwich, of the police force, and of the administration of justice. To which also, agreeably to the instructions, I have to add the "electioneering abuses," a source of much corruption and injury to the morals and industry of the weavers, and for which the city of Norwich is pre-eminent.

Of Violence of the Weavers.

The city of Norwich has often been the scene of riot. Mr. Alderman Athow says, "It always was so at intervals, ever since I was born; it is so at the present moment, only that the weavers try now to keep within the law. They act under legal advice. They will drive the trade out of Norwich. Nine or ten years ago I tried to break down the fixed list of prices; they broke my windows for it."

In the time of the war the scale of prices had been raised, and in 1829, when the prices of the necessaries of life had been reduced, the manufacturers thought it equitable that there should be a reduction of wages; and they were the more urged to this, as they learned that in other parts of the kingdom goods were made at a lower rate than they were giving, and consequently they were undersold in the market, and the trade was leaving the city of Norwich. There was, therefore, a private meeting of the manufacturers, at which it was agreed that the price of weaving bombazines, for which 1*s.* 3*d.* was paid, should be reduced to 1*s.*, and so on in proportion with other fabrics. This was strenuously resisted by the weavers, who made a general strike, and several manufacturers suffered personal outrage. Mr. Henry Willett, in reply to a question whether he had not suffered himself, says, "I considered that all the manufacturers who took an openly active part in this reduction were in considerable personal danger. I was myself, on returning from my warehouse to my dwelling-house, attacked by a multitude of several hundreds, and but for the assistance rendered to me by the Rev. Prebendary Wodehouse, my life would probably have fallen a sacrifice. I got into a court with a narrow entrance to it, and Mr. Prebendary Wodehouse placed himself at the entrance, and addressed the people, whilst I made my escape; but I could not return to my own house until a strong police force came to my assistance. In the course of that day the military had to be called out. Even at my own door a large stone was thrown at me, which might have proved very serious. Colonel Harvey, a magistrate, who was with me, was struck by a stone. Mr. Wright, who with me and others took an active part in this reduction, was waylaid, and vitriol was thrown into his face, and that gentleman thereby lost the use of his right eye. The rest of the manufacturers endeavoured to throw the blame on us, although many of them approved of the reduction, and were parties to it.

it. The reduction, notwithstanding all this, was effected; the masters feeling that they must either obtain the reduction or abandon the trade."

Mr. John Wright, referred to in the preceding evidence, may be seen at his warehouse with a large green shade, which completely hides his right eye. He was not desirous of giving evidence, and it would have been unfeeling to have urged him to do so.

In respect of the present time, many of the manufacturers most readily explained the state of dread under which they lived, but were unwilling to appear as witnesses.

There were, however, two manufacturers who had greater courage than the rest, Mr. Samuel Daynes and Mr. John Clarke.

The former of these witnesses states:—"In 1831, a man who came in from the country for work, and was considered as doing it under the union price, was waylaid about five miles from Norwich and dreadfully beaten with hurdles from the hedge, and was left on the ground. After they had left him, one of the miscreants turned back, and endeavoured to pour vitriol into his ear; some of the liquid run down into his eye, and he lost the sight of it. Some goods, supposed to be Mr. Wright's, were stopped last winter; and a cart in this very street, before my own door, was stopped, and a committee-man got up into it, and but for the interference of the police it would have been carried off."

Mr. Daynes states that there has been no open riot for the last five years, since the present committee came into power. They chiefly direct their efforts to prevent any weavers in Norwich from working below the list prices, and to prevent any goods being sent out of Norwich to be wove in the country. One of the methods adopted is to wait upon the weavers, as soon as they hear of any being employed below what they consider the list price, and to dissuade them from continuing their work. They also wait on the manufacturer, and in addition send him an admonitory letter; further, they set a watch round his house to see who goes out and in: work is also cut and destroyed.

The evidence of Mr. John Clarke will explain this system:

"*Q.* Do you consider that the Norwich manufacturers can give the present list prices, and at the same time withstand the competition of Kidderminster and the towns in the north?—*A.* I do not think we can, but we have also to stand the competition amongst ourselves. I held out for the list prices as long as I could. In 1832, soon after I commenced business, overseers of parishes came to me, and offered to take my work, and get it done below the Norwich prices, but I was unwilling to do so; but last summer, finding it impossible longer to hold out, I called my weavers together and explained to them the state of things, and that I must either reduce the wages in Norwich, or send my work into the country. About Christmas last applications were made to me for work below the list prices, and I gave some out.

"What was the consequence?—Some of my people went and told the union committee, and soon after Mr. Fish and a committee-man came to me, and charged me with destroying their prices, and said, 'We warn you to desist.' I said to them, 'I warn you to go down stairs;' this was on Tuesday the 30th of January last. The next day Mr. Fish came to me with a letter, which I now show to you. The last words are, 'our every legal energy will therefore, and therefore only, be directed to oppose you in every shape.' They then called my hands together, and tried to operate on their minds. I went to the magistrates, and told them that I had no doubt some of my work was likely to be cut or destroyed. Soon after I had a letter which I now show you, signed by 13 of my work-people, and with 19 names of other work-people, with crosses after them, declaring that they would not work for me. I took this letter to the magistrates, but I could not get redress, and the same night two pieces of work were cut, but I could get no redress. They said I must prove the act of cutting against some one individual, or they would not interfere. The man who had my work was at the Turkey-cock, kept by Mr. Fish, and his wife in the evening went out, leaving the candle burning, and did not come back for three hours, and then said that she found the work cut on her return. The magistrates refused to remand her, or otherwise I should have been able to get additional evidence.

"I have been told that your premises were watched?—Such was the case

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from February 8th to Saturday April 7th, the night before your arrival in Norwich. They knew of your coming. Whether they will again lay my premises under blockade, after that you are gone, I know not.

"How did their watchmen conduct themselves?—They stopped my hands, and advised them to carry back their work. Whenever I went out they sent some one to follow me to see to what places I went, and with whom I transacted business. One day they followed a cart of mine, going with goods about the city; I managed to get it out of their way. Next Friday they followed a cart five miles out into the country; a county magistrate saw it, and sent a policeman who took one of them into custody. That magistrate sent for me, and told me that as soon as my property got out of the county of the city of Norwich, and into the county of Norfolk, he should use means to protect it; but I have met with no offers of protection from our magistrates, nor do I expect any. I have been obliged to send out my work by night, and that with considerable risk."

Mr. Daynes gives evidence in perfect accordance with that of Mr. Clarke:

"It was formerly very dangerous to send any work to the country; it was likely to be destroyed; and, in fact, goods have been destroyed; that occurred to some of my own. In common with many others I have been greatly interfered with in my business, of which I can state one remarkable instance: In London I was asked if I could make bandanas, and I made a sample, and stated at what price I could manufacture them; I, in consequence, had an order for 100 pieces. Soon after I began the work a deputation of the union waited upon me, with a request that I would raise my wages 2 *d.* a yard, as Mr. Francis had done. I told them that I had taken the order in expectation of accomplishing it at a certain price, which I had ascertained by inquiry among the weavers, and I could not afford to give more under that order. The union then told my weavers to give over working for me, and some of them sent in their work, and went on the parish. However, I persisted, and last winter many being out of work I had less difficulty in succeeding. From the first my own weavers were content; and why should the union interfere? Some manufacturers, in consequence of the union, have got their bandanas made at Sudbury."

An admonitory letter to Mr. Daynes, from the union, concludes as follows:

"With feelings strongly inclined for satisfactory and mutual agreement, we send this earnest request that you will consider the propriety of paying according to the list agreed to, and generally recognized, of prices, as we shall, as in duty bound to paying masters and operatives, use, however unpleasantly, all legal means in opposition to your proceedings.

"We remain, &c.
"The Weavers' Committee.

"Hole-in-the-Wall, St. John's Madder, Market." (signed) "*R. Warnett*, Chairman. "*S. Fish*, jun., Secretary.

The manufacturers do all that they can to escape the "legal means" of the union, and get their work sent into the country. Mr. Daynes states,

"They adopt 50 methods, just as if they were smuggling. The work will be packed up, as it were finished goods going to London; sometimes it is put into boxes like tea-boxes, and other disguises are adopted. The work is also sent off by night, or on Sunday mornings, at such times as it is thought the weavers are not on the watch.

"*Q.* Do they conduct their business so systematically as to support a watch?—Certainly they do.

"At the Mechanics' Institution, about a fortnight ago, 22d March last, I put certain questions to Mr. Fish, the secretary of the weavers' union, and I have a copy of them and of the answers."

(*Witness handed in a copy, from which the following is an extract:*)

'Do you employ or pay a police or watch?—We do.

'For what purpose?—To watch who go in and out of the premises of Mr. Clarke, and to advise them 'not to touch that unclean thing, called underprice work,' and to avoid his premises as they would a plague.

'How

'How much do you pay them?—Four-pence per day.

'Any other remuneration?—Yes, the persons employed to watch are persons who have been victimized by Mr. Clarke, and have an allowance of 8 *s.* per week besides the 4 *d.* per day.'

"Were many persons present when Mr. Fish gave those answers to your questions?—From 200 to 300. Mr. Fish had previously been excited by the discussion, and he gave his answers very resolutely, and without any hesitation.

"From which you may infer that Mr. Fish, and his associates of the union, have so familiarized their minds to their proceedings, that they have lost all idea of their illegality and of their impropriety?—Most certainly; Mr. Fish has told me they considered it legal.

"Do you know from observation yourself, that a watch has for some weeks actually been set?—It is quite notorious; and I have seen them myself. A manufacturer, of whose honour I can entertain no doubt, has informed me that he saw the watch, and heard one man say to the others, 'B—— his eyes! serve him out with vitriol, as they did to John Wright; but instead of putting out one eye, put out both.'

"Do you consider that many of the manufacturers are under feelings of dread of personal violence?—Most certainly they are; and I have no doubt that many of them have told you so, although they dread to come forward and sign evidence to that effect."

The conduct of the union, and of the weavers generally, in respect to the dispute respecting camlets, will be seen by the following narrative of Mr. Robberds:—

"Having ascertained that manufacturers in other parts of the kingdom were selling camlets at lower prices than I could charge, and that they were enabled to do this by the lower rate of wages which they paid for weaving, I announced to my weavers, about the middle of last May, that from that time I should reduce the scale by which they were paid. Soon after I had taken this step, some men, styling themselves a deputation from the weavers' committee, came to speak to me on the subject. I inquired if they were camlet weavers, and having been answered in the negative, I stated that I had nothing to say to them, and would hear nothing from them; that I knew of no weavers' committee; that the regulation of wages was a question to be decided between me and my workmen; and that I should allow no other parties to interfere. On this they withdrew, and I afterwards agreed to explain to two of my weavers, attended by a third person, the circumstances which rendered the proposed alteration necessary.

"The rate of wages which I offered is still considerably higher than that given to the hand-loom weavers of Yorkshire, whose average earnings are not more than 12 *s.* a week; while, at my reduced rate, regular and industrious workmen can bring in from 15 *s.* to 20 *s.* per week, and their wives and sons (of a competent age) from 12 *s.* to 15 *s.* more.

"The committee, however, although there were no camlet weavers among them, would not allow my hands to take any work. A watch was stationed, from six in the morning till twelve at night, at each end of the street in which my manufactory is situated, to observe all that was done, and to intimidate those who were willing to take work. There were many who stated both to me, and others, that they were anxious to be employed, but dared not, on account of the threats used against them. At length a few ventured to brave the danger; but some, as they were carrying away their work, were assaulted in the open streets, and forced to bring it back; others, who reached their homes in safety, were there beset by riotous mobs, and compelled to return the materials unwrought; and, in two instances, houses where the work was in progress were broken open during the night, and the goods destroyed on the loom.

"Wherever I could obtain sufficient evidence the offenders were taken before the magistrates, and in most of these cases the committee undertook their defence. Some of the parties were convicted of assaults, and fined, but the fines were immediately paid (no doubt by the committee), and the parties at liberty to repeat the same outrages. Some underwent short terms of imprisonment; and others were bound over to keep the peace, which they were among the first to break. Six of the watchers were summoned before the magistrates

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on a charge of obstructing my business. The evidence against them was clear; they were informed that the charge was proved, but were recommended to acknowledge their error, and to promise that the system of watching should be discontinued. They agreed to this, and the case was adjourned for a month. But this produced no good effect; the watching was continued as before. I, therefore, summoned three others on the same charge. The case was proved, and the men were bound over to appear at the assizes, to answer an indictment against them for a conspiracy. All these proceedings were of no avail; intimidation and violence escaping thus almost with impunity, were carried to greater lengths. The dispute began to be rendered subservient to the purposes of party. One of the most useful members of the court of guardians was turned out by the parish which he represented, because he disapproved the conduct of the weavers; and candidates for municipal honours sought to acquire popularity by courting the promoters of these disturbances. Subscriptions were collected for their support, to which publicans and small tradesmen were the principal contributors: some, deluded by the idea that a high rate of wages would enable the working classes to spend more freely, and others influenced by the fear of becoming marked men, and losing their customers. Those who refused to give any money, or in any manner discountenanced the proceedings of the weavers, were abused as 'under price' men, and every possible effort was made to injure them in their business. Thus encouraged, the committee issued hand-bills, announcing that they had sufficient funds to maintain the camlet weavers for several months; and it was generally understood that they received an allowance of 3*s.* each per week.

"In the meantime I had commenced preparations for making my camlet by the power-loom, and passed some weeks in Yorkshire for that purpose. On my return from that district towards the end of August, I found my weavers generally dissatisfied with the conduct of the committee, and severely pinched by starving so long on 3*s.* per week, when they might have been earning at least five times as much. Many of them applied to me for work. I told them I should give them none, unless they went publicly to the magistrates, stating that they were willing to be employed on my terms, and claiming efficient protection for themselves and the materials entrusted to them. They at once complied with these conditions, and an additional police force was engaged to guard, both by day and night, the houses of those who might take work. But before these arrangements were completed, a body of nine or ten men attacked the house of a weaver, named Wells, about 12 o'clock, in the night of the 28th of August. Having broken open the outer door, they forced an entrance into the room where the man and his family slept, and in which was also his loom. There, while one of them stood over him with a pistol, and threatened to shoot him, some of the others totally destroyed his work; but before they could extinguish a candle which the wife had lighted on the first alarm, two of them, named English and Engall, were recognized, and both were apprehended during the night. On the following day they were fully committed, and bail refused for them. Both of them are sons of publicans. English had been a notorious leader in all tumults, and his father's house the head-quarters, where some of the most active were always in attendance, to receive information, to issue orders, and distribute drink. The apprehension of these two men, and the vigilant observation of the police, produced an immediate calm. More weavers than I could employ came for work, and those who obtained it have been unmolested. My business is now proceeding quietly on my own terms, and offers have been made to me to take even lower wages than I am paying.

"But the consequences of these proceedings have been very injurious to the working classes; not only have they lost the circulation among them of at least 1,000 *l.* in wages, but three months of idleness and delusive excitement have deteriorated all their habits. Many of them will never recover from the effects of their privations. One old man, who had for many years maintained himself decently, and for whom I had ordered work, came to thank me for it; but he added, 'I must give up. I have been obliged to sell every thing, and starvation has brought me so low that I can do no more. I must go home to my parish, and for this I have to thank the silk weavers' committee.'"

The necessary and inevitable result of such transactions will, however, be the introduction of the power-loom into this city. Should the hand-loom weavers suffer from this, they will only reap the fruits of their own folly; but should they

they meet the change in a proper spirit, and should their masters carry it through with the requisite energy, it will give a new impulse to our now declining industry, and by a judicious improvement of our natural advantages, Norwich may again become what it once was, the principal seat of the worsted trade.

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Effects of the Violence of the Weavers.

The unhappy results of the violent conduct of the union, and the want of such a government and police force as would restrain such violent conduct, have been,

1. The prevention of the introduction of machinery into the city.
2. The prevention of the introduction of capital.
3. The loss of many fabrics.

As to the prevention of the introduction of machinery, Mr. Stark has given distinct evidence on this subject. Mr. Dodshon Blake, manager of the yarn factory, is of opinion that machinery would have been introduced long ago, and with great advantage, but for the mistaken views of the operative weavers. He is of opinion that, to machinery, the city must in future look for its prosperity.

Mr. James Spalding, an operative, states, "One great cause of the distress in Norwich is the folly of the people in objecting to machinery. I know that capital has been driven out of our city by it which would have employed hundreds."

If the prejudices against machinery had been manifested by a disinclination to work in factories where machinery was employed, there would have been cause to deplore the fact, but no cause for imputing moral blame to the weavers of Norwich; but as the matter stands, their conduct cannot be otherwise viewed than as most highly to be condemned. The men of the union are not content with abstaining themselves from what work they choose, and with applying persuasion to others, they have employed physical force; they have attempted to destroy life; they have inflicted the most grievous physical injury; they have brought men into terror for the safety of life, person, and property; they have denied to other men the right of judging for themselves, as to how they would employ their own industry; and all this because they hoped that it would be to themselves a benefit; and they cared not how much they might trample on the rights of others so be that they might obtain their own ends.

The weavers manifest no tolerance towards any of their number who oppose their views: woe to the committee-man who advises counsel not in accordance with the opinion of the majority. "I was turned out," says Mr. Spalding, "because I differed in opinion from them; there were five or six of us who firmly declared our sentiments; they said we were free traders, and plumped us right out."

By being a "free trader," is understood in Norwich to be a person opposed to a fixed rate of wages, and desirous of leaving employer and employed in freedom to make their own arrangements.

That the conduct of the union has prevented the introduction of capital is the opinion of many of the witnesses who have been examined. Indeed, what capitalists would wish to settle in a place where his life, his person, his property were insecure; where he was not at liberty to employ persons who were desirous of getting employment, unless on terms which he could not afford; where he was liable to the indignities and insults in defiance of law, to which the Norwich manufacturers are obliged to submit?

Of the manner in which fabrics are driven from the city we have already had several instances. The following is a striking case stated by Mr. Hastings: Being asked whether of his own knowledge he knew of any fabric having been lost by the conduct of the union, he replies—

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"The lastings is one fabric, being that of which the upper part of ladies' shoes is made. When I was at Mr. Theobald's, I wanted to introduce lastings, and to give the same price as paid in Yorkshire; and we wrote to Yorkshire to know what was paid there; it was only 12*s.* 6*d.* a piece. We were willing to take 1*s.* off our profit, and add it to the wages, and we gave out the work at 13*s.* 6*d.*, and more we could not afford to give. Mr. Fish told my master that the weavers should not work for any such money, and the men were deterred and brought the work back; the effect is, that no lastings are now made in Norwich; that is one branch lost to us. The fact is, that Halifax is carrying off some of the best of the Norwich trade. The goods are made there as well as with us, and are sent to Norwich to be dyed, and then sent abroad. They cannot equal us in dyeing. If we cannot manufacture at such a price as to meet them, the consequence necessarily follows that we lose the trade. I was threatened to be shot in the streets for giving out the lastings at the price which we offered."

Of the Disunion of the Manufacturers.

Whilst a large number of the weavers are united together into an union, and that union rules the whole body with a firm hand, there is no such thing as any society whatever amongst the manufacturers. Mr. Alderman Athow states, that "they never meet together as a body at all."

Mr. Philip Etheridge, who is himself a manufacturer, being asked, "Do the manufacturers hold a society amongst themselves for their mutual benefit?" replies, "Not at all; not in any branch. There is no association between the masters, unless it be that they have formed a regard for each other by having acted together in politics."

Of Party Spirit.

There is no cause which has had so direful an effect on the prosperity of the trade in Norwich as party spirit. In almost every town possessing Parliamentary representation there is a complaint of party spirit; but in Norwich it far exceeds that of any other place, and is carried to an extent which is utterly amazing. The people are distinguished by colours; "purple and orange" denote the Tories, and "blue and white" the Whigs or Radicals. The party to which every man in Norwich belongs, from the highest to the lowest, is as well known as if he daily wore clothes of the colours by which it is designated. The exasperation of the one party against the other is such as to make every thinking man lament that human nature should be capable of such feelings.

Every man in Norwich will admit all this to be true, and will join in lamenting it, as the bane of social intercourse, and the chief obstacle to the prosperity of the city. Many will have candour to admit their own share in the almost universal guilt, and will express a wish that there never again might be an election, parliamentary, municipal, parochial, or of any other sort whatsoever; and, with a consciousness of their own weakness, will confess, that, when the next election comes, they will be drawn into the fury of the contest, and be as mad as before.

In the history of the manufactures of Norwich is already given the strong evidence of Mr. William Stark on this subject.

Mr. Etheridge deplores the results of party contests:

"The party spirit enters into every thing; every institution of the town is a subject of party election; it is like two towns in one, and acting in hostility against each other."

Mr. Alderman Athow says,

"Politics greatly demoralize the place; they hold out the temptation of drinking, and the temptation of money to induce men to violate their consciences;

sciences; it is not only in the election of Members of Parliament, but in the municipal elections also. Ten pounds are given commonly enough in a municipal election; I have known 100 *l.* to be given when the contest was likely to run very close. We have eight wards in this city, two of them are so decidedly Whig that there is little contest there. Another ward, inhabited by the aristocracy, is Tory, and there is no contest there. But the other five wards must be regularly bought, and the real contest is merely which party has got the best purse. The Whigs are as bad as the Tories, and the Tories are as bad as the Whigs, and there is not a pin to choose between them.

"*Q.* Then politics, I presume, enter into all your elections of every description?—*A.* Sir, there is not an election of any sort into which politics do not enter, from the election of the sexton of the poorest parish in Norwich to the election of the mayor of the city. In our charities, and in our literary institutions, and in every thing, it is the same. In choosing the committee of the public library there is always a struggle between the Whigs and the Tories.

"Then a man has no chance at all, and can hardly live in Norwich, unless he belong to one party or the other?—Indeed I do not see well how he can."

Mr. Wilson, the accountant of the guardians, confirms this latter statement of Mr. Athow, as to a man being forced into one party or the other, do what he please; in the city of Norwich neutrality is impossible.

The last general election at Norwich was followed by an election amongst the boys, which, although amusing, shows how fully, even from their earliest youth, the natives of Norwich are imbued with party spirit. When the parents thus train them in the way that they should go, we may feel but too sure that when they are old they will not depart from it. Mr. Etheridge thus describes the boys' election:

"It was a real contest, carried on with great zeal, and every formality duly observed. At first all the voters were unpaid, but as the contest drew towards a close every means fair and foul was adopted to get boys to the poll; some were seized by force, others were induced by hire. At first marbles were given for votes, bye and bye the price rose to pence, and towards the very close from 1 *s.* to 1 *s.* 6 *d.* was the reward of the suffrage. The "blue and white" had a majority. There was a chairing procession, and a grand dinner and ball to celebrate the event. That might pass for a comedy, but politics render every thing more of a tragedy in Norwich."

Their success in the boys' election was not the only triumph of the "blue and white" party; the lower orders had their triumph also. Two pugilistic heroes, the one a "blue and white," and the other a "purple and yellow," agreed to decide in their way the merits of their principles. The Whig hero was a weaver, in the employment of Mr. Etheridge; that gentleman states, "The man was a month in training. About a fortnight before the battle he declined a piece of work because he could not be spared from preparatory exercises. The man is in my employment now. Many of my weavers went to see the battle; there was a strong muster of the operative politicians on both sides of the question, and a grand dinner among the 'blue and white' men afterwards to celebrate the triumph of their champion. You may see the parties when you come to my warehouse." Men present at the battle were afterwards seen, and the following further particulars were stated: "Mr. Edward Painter, formerly a professional pugilist, supplied the ropes and stakes; the scene of action was about eight miles from Norwich, each party went out with cockades in their pockets, and when the 'purple and yellow' hero could not come to time the 'blue and white' partisans mounted their cockades, and displayed their flag, and they returned with shouts of triumph to the city. The 'purple and yellow' weavers, however, console themselves with the fact that their hero, though unfortunate in his inferior science, displayed a valour and hardihood which under better tuition would have secured him the victory."

Another triumph of the same description, in March 1838, under similar circumstances, had again delighted the "blue and white" faction.

If the energy and thoughts of the men of Norwich had not been absorbed in party politics, long before now the town would have had an efficient police,

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and the majesty of the law would have attained respect; enterprizing men would then have ventured to establish machinery in their manufactures, which they have not dared to do. The probability is that, under such circumstances, the vast spaces of ground now empty within the walls, and much land in the vicinity, would have been covered with buildings, and the population, instead of 60,000 or 70,000, would have been 120,000, or 180,000; the ground would be yielding a rental many times over what it does at present; there would have been many more opulent manufacturers and tradesmen of every description, and Norwich would have been one of the chief places in the empire. Such, however, has not been the case, and until party spirit subside, little hope can be entertained of its prosperity.

An important branch of this subject still remains to be considered, which is the force by which disorders may be suppressed, and the peace preserved; and the authority by which that force is directed, and by which justice is administered.

Of the Police Force.

There is a day police in the city of Norwich, and a watch at night. The day police consists of 18 men; they have a uniform similar to that of the police of London, and walk about the streets during the day. The city is about a mile and a quarter long, and a mile broad; there are small suburbs beyond the city walls. Connected with the day police there are four supernumeraries, who do duty in case of a policeman being sick. The watch consists of 32 men, who "are supplied with the usual necessaries, a great coat and a lantern." The watchmen are paid 10*s.* 6*d.* a week in winter, and 7*s.* in summer, and they are said to make some perquisites by calling up persons in the morning. Attached to the watch are six supernumeraries, whose duties are described thus by Mr. Alderman Athow:

"In case of any of the watchmen being sick, a supernumerary takes his place; or if a watchman has a piece of work which he is desirous of finishing, by asking leave he may stop at his work, and the supernumerary will take his place."

It will naturally be expected that the men who work during the day will be inclined to sleep during the night; but as a check against this propensity, the following method is adopted:

"There are clocks all over the city, which the watchmen have to pull as they go their rounds. The clocks are so constructed, that if for one quarter of an hour a certain string was not pulled it would stop, and it would be known at what time the watchman had not done his duty. I went to Derby to see how the scheme answered there, and I got it introduced here. There is a similar plan at some great establishments where there is a private watchman."

As far as regards the security of the inhabitants against common depredations on property, the police, according to Mr. Athow, is sufficiently effective; but there are other and equally important duties for which its strength is evidently insufficient.

A main duty of a police is to protect the person and property, not only against habitual thieves and housebreakers, but also against any other portion of the community who will take upon themselves to use force to disturb the rights of their neighbours, and to compel them to act in obedience to what may be their will and pleasure. Until every man be made to feel easy in his own mind that his person and property are effectually secure, he has not obtained that protection which the Government is bound to give him; this in a large town is only to be obtained by a sufficient body of police.

There are men of high consideration of both parties in Norwich who will speak with great coolness of calling out, in cases of disturbance, the military from the barracks. But the military are a tremendous engine, which it may at times be necessary to employ, but the seldomer the better. The soldiers either do nothing, or do too much. The populace will not believe that the bullet or the bayonet will actually be used until too late, and all parties lament the result;

result; but they have no incredulity as to the policeman's staff, and when they feel its force, they experience severe pain for a few days, but they get well, and are better subjects ever after.

Soldiers can act only in a body, and under command; they are not accustomed to think for themselves as to what they are to do, because they look to the command of others, and they cannot be trusted to act without leaders. But with policemen it is otherwise; every individual constable is daily and hourly in the exercise of discretion, and without it he would be incapable of his duties.

Policemen soon learn to know the person of every man who makes himself conspicuous. Ringleaders who figure in the day-time at the head of a body of followers, before next morning find themselves within the bars of a gaol, and all this comes about with very little noise or disturbance; the leaders being gone the main body become quiet.

Every thing tends to show that Norwich is pre-eminently in need of a police. A larger number may be required at first than will be necessary afterwards. A sufficient force fairly to subdue the mob may be needed in the first instance, but when once they are made to feel that person and property cannot be interfered with, and every man must be at liberty to buy or to sell labour or any other commodity without any third party daring to interfere, a much smaller number will suffice. Whatever outcry may be raised against a police force at first, the experience of London shows that they will soon become popular. Ever since the London police and the London mob fairly tried their strength, and the police proved their superior power, there has been no further contest; and the mob and the police, like surly school-boys who have settled their differences, agree like brothers, and the evidence given in this inquiry proves that the services of the police are duly appreciated.

On the Administration of Justice.

In the city of Norwich, under the Municipal Act, 5 & 6 Will. 4, c. 76, there are 20 justices of the peace appointed by the Crown; of these 20 justices, one is the mayor, another the sheriff; there are three who are aldermen, and five are councillors. Of the other 10, the greater part are of the same political party, "blue and white;" and whether they aspire to the offices just mentioned, can be certainly known only when election times arrive. Before the passing of this Municipal Act, the other party, the "purple and orange," performed the duties of magistracy; these men were quite as political as the present party, and merely differed in colour.

In Norwich party spirit ran then as high as it does now, and more was impossible; this was a misfortune to the city, and the case still continues the ame.

When magistrates entertain strong party feelings, it is a difficult matter not in some degree to be biassed by them; and whether they be so or not, they cannot escape being suspected. That such a suspicion prevails, and to a great extent, no one who goes to Norwich can long be ignorant.

There is a considerable difficulty in the present state of the law for magistrates, when ever so well inclined, in protecting from all the annoyances which the weavers may attempt. But if they are disinclined to act, either from a feeling in favour of the weavers, or from a dread of losing votes at the next municipal or Parliamentary election, it is easy to find excuse. Besides these motives, in such a place as Norwich, with such a riotous population, and a police force totally inadequate for the preservation of the peace, the magistrates themselves may not altogether unreasonably deem something due to their own personal safety. Mr. Daynes says, "The authorities themselves are under fear, and many persons who have been injured are afraid to appear as evidence, whilst there is such indecision in high places." Mr. John Clarke speaks out very distinctly his views of the present state of the local government. Being asked the question, "Do you consider that there is any inherent defect in the present system of magistracy?" he replies, "Most certainly so. I do not wish to blame the gentlemen individually, but men connected with manufactures are unfit for the magisterial duties of a manufacturing town. They dread the loss of popularity with the workmen. It is a delicate matter to adjudicate on the business

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of another manufacturer; besides, party is the bane of everything. The magistrates seek popularity in order to be elected into the corporation. Men not now in the corporation are desirous of being so, and here every man serves his own party. I confess I at first thought that as I was a 'blue and white,' they would have taken up my cause; but I have since considered that I did them no service at the general election, or any of the municipal elections, except voting for them, and that if they had taken my part, their party would have lost more than it could have gained, and therefore their conduct is just what was to be expected. It is of no use to blame individuals; the circumstances are so, and no change of men could alter them. Tory magistracy would be just the same. When a man's colour is seen, we generally can tell what will be the result. Until we get two stipendiary magistrates who will be kept from all politics and from all manufacturing, we shall never have justice; that is the opinion of thousands in this town."

In respect to one part of the preceding evidence, about adjudicating in the business of another manufacturer, it may be observed, that if it be an arbitration of a dispute between a master and workmen under the Act 5 Geo. 4, c. 96, a manufacturer cannot act as a magistrate; but it is only in respect of matters under that Act that a manufacturer is by section 12 disqualified from acting.

So much of this Report was written previously to revisiting Norwich in September last.

The proceedings respecting the camlet weavers, and the other weavers who interfered in the contest during the last summer, as detailed by Mr. Robberds, materially strengthen the evidence obtained in April, and the impression made by it.

In the opinion expressed by Mr. Clarke, that it is of no use to blame any individuals for what any other individuals similarly situated would have done, I fully concur. The evil is not in the men, but in the system.

Two police magistrates would be desirable were it not for the expense, and probably one would be found sufficient.

What is required is a paid magistrate to do all those duties which come under the head of police.

A gentleman, not a native of Norwich, learned in the law, having no other profession, and accepting the office with a knowledge of its duties and difficulties, will, as a matter of course, make up his mind to the discharge of its duties, however unpleasant or unpopular. In his case, after a time, at least, there will be no unpopularity from his doing his duty. All parties will feel the benefit. They will know that he must do it, and that he cannot escape disagreeable consequences himself if he shrink from it. Nobody will blame him for doing what all feel and know is his official duty. The chief caution for a paid magistrate will be to keep himself clear, not only of all party, but from all suspicion of connexion with any party, and he must not be a native; for, if so, to avoid suspicion would be utterly impossible. Whoever undertakes the duty of the paid magistracy must act so as to be perfectly neutral to both colours, to the blue and to the purple. He must not vote for Members of Parliament; he must not vote for councillors to the corporation, nor for guardians of the poor, nor for churchwardens, nor overseers, nor for any public office whatever. Nay, such is the state of Norwich, that he ought not to vote in any charity, or in any literary institution; for, unfortunately, there is no vote of any sort or description whatsoever which a man could give, without being thereby dyed "blue and white," or "purple and orange." The police magistrate would, no doubt, be the only gentleman, or almost the only one, in Norwich, who did not belong to one or other of these parties; but under the most extraordinary state of party excitement, it will be most important that he should be in every respect most decidedly neutral.

Electioneering Abuses.

The last general election at Norwich afforded a striking view of the party spirit of the city, and of the practices by which the leading men have acted on the poverty, the necessities, and the frailty and wickedness of the poorer citizens,

citizens, many of whom are weavers, and their interests have much suffered in consequence.

The number of voters for the "purple and orange" candidates was 1,865 and 1,863; and for the "blue and white" candidates, 1,843 and 1,831; of whom 1,400 voted under the influence of the most open application of pecuniary temptation.

The money spent, according to the information given to me by two gentlemen who could not but know, was about 44,000*l.*

The "blue and white" party spent more money than the "purple and orange" party; and this is attributable to what many consider to have been a blunder in their tactics, and which is thus explained.

The "purple and orange" party had felt secure that there would be no opposition; and if the "blue and white" party had kept quiet until close on the day of election, which was on a Tuesday, it is supposed that they might have taken their opponents by surprise, and snatched a victory. But they commenced operations on the Wednesday, being six days before the election, and began actively to buy votes, and to carry off the voters "into coop." They had thus the expense of six days to defray. But as soon as the "purple and orange" party saw what was doing, they sent off to London for money, which arrived on Saturday, and they had time to buy back their friends from the "blue and white" party; and those whom they carried into coop, they had to keep only three days, which was much less expense than keeping them six days.

One of the chiefs of the "blue and white" party admitted the impolicy of their early declaration of a contest, but said that his views had been overruled in the committee.

The contest was carried on very openly. There was no hypocrisy, no concealment, on either side. There were 1,400 to be bought, and about them lay the struggle.

One gentleman stated to me that he himself had the distribution of money to the voters on the day of election. He sat at a table in a large room, having before him parcels coiled up of bank-notes of 10*l.*, of 15*l.*, of 20*l.*, of 25*l.*, of 30*l.*, of 35*l.*, of 40*l.* value, all in readiness, that there might be no loss of time in counting. The voters, one at a time, entered at one door, passed through the room, and out at another door. Every man was asked what he had agreed for, and it was handed to him. One man would be so innocent as to ask for only 10*l.*; the next man would ask for 20*l.*, and both were paid with equal readiness. Then might come, perhaps, one who would ask for 15*l.*, and it would be paid; but with a caution given to him not to spoil the market by letting anybody know that he had got more than 10*l.* But the other sums were given. A grocer or other substantial tradesman looked for 40*l.*, and there were the cases of two professional men who each had 50*l.*

The gentleman who paid all this money stated it with the most hearty frankness; and when he was told that the guilt of all these doings rested upon himself and on the other criminals who composed the committee, he laughed, consoling himself that he had many coadjutors with whom to support the burden.

Towards the close of the poll nobody could say on what side lay the victory; every vote therefore was sought out, and no money was thought too much.

The case of one poor man deserves to be particularized. Some years ago, being then in great distress, a manufacturer took pity on him, and gave employment both to him and his wife. They proved steady people, and they were never allowed to be out of work. A general election came on, and the man was offered 15*l.*, and he refused it, and voted on the same side with his employer. Another election came on, and he was again tempted, and again stood firm. He said that the manufacturer had now for many years employed him and his wife, and he had never been without work, and thereby had had a comfortable living, and he should consider himself the most ungrateful of men if for money he were to vote against him. After the close of the last election, the manufacturer was told that this man had voted against his party, and he sent for him, and made the inquiry. The man looked very uneasy, and said that it was really so. The manufacturer said, "Did you not say that you would be the most ungrateful of men if you ever voted against me?" "I did so," said he, "and I never intended to do otherwise, but there was a great deal of money

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offered me, a great deal indeed, and I was quite unable to resist it." The manufacturer said, "And what might be the money; was it 100 *l.*?" The man said, "Sir, a gread deal more than that." It is known that the sum paid was 135 *l.* This statement was made to me by the manufacturer himself. To pass by the base seducers, and to bestow blame on the poor man to whom such an irresistible sum was offered, would be demanding from poor men a strength of feeling which the condition of human nature does not entitle us to expect.

At the election previous to the last, the number of voters to be bought was 900; at the last election it was 1,400. It is the tendency of the system to extend its corrupting ravages, and on every returning occasion to draw more and more within its vortex.

To the honour of both parties it deserves to be stated, that neither of them inflicted on the voters the guilt of the crime of perjury, by demanding the oath against bribery to be administered. The oath could not have prevented the voters from accepting the money, and it is devoutly to be wished that such oath may never be administered again.

To the glory of both parties, it deserves also to be stated, that they behaved with the most punctilious sense of honour towards each other. If a man had received 10 *l.* from the "blue and white" party, and a "purple and orange" committee-man had got hold of him, and bought him back at 15*l.*, the 5 *l.* only was handed to the voter, and the 10 *l.* was sent back to the "blue and white" committee. If a "blue and white" committee-man got hold of this voter, and bought him back a second time at 20 *l.*, only the 5 *l.* would be handed to him, and the 15 *l.* would be sent to the "purple and orange" committee. So in other cases. It would have saved trouble to have kept a debtor and creditor account against each other, and only to have paid over the balance, and in such a systematic arrangement as was made, it is wonderful this mode of doing business was not adopted, instead of settling the cases one by one. It is an improvement which on a future day we may expect to see established. Such a system of buying and selling votes has a ruinous effect on the morals of the unhappy voters; a man cannot afterwards be on good terms with himself.

A contested election most seriously injures the trade of the city. Some of the manufacturers stated that they considered that it was equivalent fully to the loss of one month.

A manufacturer stated, that such was his dread of elections, that he would willingly give 500 *l.* if there were never to be another. Yet he knew his own weakness; when the next election came round, some of his friends would come to him, and drag him to the meeting. He would then be excited, subscribe his money, and go on the committee, and go through the same series of labour and care as on former occasions.

The following evidence of Mr. James Spalding, an operative, will show the views of the men who still hold fast their integrity:

"*Q.* I presume that, like other people, you could have profited well by the last general election?—*A.* I never took any money for my vote; I would not do it. It would destroy my peace of mind, and blast my character. I could not show my face after it.

"Do you see election money ever do any good?—Never; it does every man harm that receives it. There is no blessing with it; it is soon all spent in drinking and extravagance, and the man is worse off than ever.

"Have you ever been put in coop at election times?—No, I never have. I never saw such work as at the last general election. In our parish of St. Martin-at-Oak I do not think that there were above two or three who were at liberty. There were about 50 or 60 black-looking desperate characters going about to lay hold of the voters and carry them off to coop, and I was afraid to come into the street; I durst hardly go into my own garden It was the same in all the other parishes in the city.

"Would they have cooped you in some house in the city?—No; that would not have been safe at such an election as the last. The voters were carried off "to coop," twelve, fourteen, or eighteen miles down into the country, to keep them out of the way of the temptation of the enemy.

"I presume that you would have nothing to fear as to eating and drinking whilst in coop?—No danger on that head, and only too much drinking; but I should

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should have been in a prison; there would have been guards all round the house, to prevent any one getting out for fear of desertion to the enemy. The whole election system is very injurious to Norwich, and disgraces all parties. It is not purity of election.

"You must see very clearly that if one party spend money and the other do not, the party which preserves purity must lose?—No doubt it is so, except on extraordinary occasions, such as the reform of Parliament. At other times money will prevail."

Mr. Hastings has given evidence to a similar effect; and the following extract will show that, in municipal elections, much the same practices prevail:

"*Q.* Do the weavers, who are rate-payers, get money for their votes at municipal elections?—*A.* To be sure they do. The Whigs began it, and drove the Tories out of the field; but the Tories were not long before trying the same thing. The way to get on the council is to be a very violent partisan; and if a man do not like to spend money of his own, the money will be found for him. Some, however, never pay any money for being elected. Under the new bill, however, there is no rioting, drunkenness, or fighting in the market-place. The system of taking the votes is most excellent."

I shall conclude this account of election abuses by an extract from a pamphlet by Mr. Richard Mackenzie Bacon, the editor of the Norwich Mercury. This gentleman very kindly lent the use of files of his paper, and gave the dates when matters of dispute had occurred between the manufacturers and the men. It is most creditable to the editor that, on every occasion, he has written as a peace-maker, and with an anxiety to abate ill-feeling on all sides. The pamphlet was written a few years ago, but the author states that, with the exception of a little change in the form, the conduct of parties is precisely the same as it was before.

"In some contests, it is believed that not less than 8,000 *l.* have been squandered upon one year's ward elections. I will give some anecdotes, which stand upon authority indisputable. Upon one occasion, when the numbers in the great ward of Wymer were very close, six freemen (dyers), working in one office, came to the resolution of voting together, all on one side or the other. The hour of closing the poll drew nigh, when a gentleman entered the office, laid down six bundles of bank-notes of 30*l.* each, 180*l.* in the sum total, and said, 'If that will satisfy you, follow me; if not, say what will.' The men took the notes.

"I was standing in the road of the village where I lived, about 20 years ago, when I saw a man personally known to me approaching at the head of between 30 or 40 of as ragged a crew as ever I beheld. The man accosted me civilly: 'Who are your friends,' said I, 'G——?' 'My chickens, sir,' said the fellow; and it appeared these were honest freemen of the city, from a neighbouring coop, where, under the custody of this keeper, they had been feasted for nearly three weeks, lest they should be lured away and taken into keeping by the opposite party. This practice has been regularly resorted to, as the publicans of Horsford, Drayton, Mulbarton, and other villages adjacent to Norwich, well know. I can also state positively, that powerful opiates have been frequently administered in their drink, to drench the senses of these poor wretches, (one man was put to sleep during the entire day of election and the night succeeding,) and even their clothes taken away whilst they were asleep, to secure their adhesion. The drunkenness, the force, the infamy of every sort that has been in continual employment, it is impossible to exaggerate. The death of men during these Saturnalia has been no uncommon event. It has now grown into a set phrase; and if one of them die, the partisans coolly inform each other that 'a chicken has dropped off his perch.'

"I was in a party of volunteer officers many years ago, when one came in and related the following occurrence in which he had just been engaged. Passing over St. Miles' bridge, he found two opposing bodies of partisans at high dispute, (this was on the night before the election,) contending for the drunken carcass of a voter. The person in question looking over the bridge, discovered by the lamp-light a dyer in a boat, whom he knew to be attached to his own side. Without the slightest hesitation, he mingled in the press, and while the rest were engaged in the affray, dropped the insensible man over the bridge

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into the boat, and returned to enjoy the confusion that arose, when the victors in the strife discovered that the body for which they had been fighting was gone. It is well known, that men have at no very remote date been seized and confined in wherries on the broads of Norfolk; and the late Alderman Crisp Brown was only rescued from such an act of violence by making his escape into the house of a gentleman in the street in which he resided. But all these are minor evils. There are well-known instances of persons enjoying fine incomes, and high confidence among their employers, who have been totally ruined by lending themselves to this misleading of others. Were I not forbidden by the rule of avoiding all personal allusion I have laid down to myself, I could substantiate this lamentable truth by a long list of the names of individuals, active in corporation and general elections during the last 40 years, who have failed in their circumstances, wholly and solely from the devotion of their time to this baneful occupation, as well as of their own property and that of their creditors also."

Under this head, the only recommendation which I suggest to the Central Board is, that the enactment of the oath against bribery be repealed, the same being totally ineffectual as to the object in view, and productive only of the crime of perjury.

WEAVERS OF FABRICS FROM HEMP, FLAX AND COTTON.

Weavers of Fabrics from Hemp and Flax.

Weavers of Hemp, Flax and Cotton.

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The weavers of fabrics made from the materials just mentioned are comparatively few throughout all the counties within which my inquiries have been made, and in respect of the amount in value of the goods which they produce, they are but little important as compared with weavers of the same fabrics in other districts in the kingdom; but an account of their condition will tend much to illustrate the condition of the weavers in other fabrics, and for that reason deserves attention.

One result clearly demonstrated by an inquiry into the state of this branch of weaving is, that where there is a constant uniform employment, or something approaching to it, although the income of the weaver be only moderate, he is in a much more comfortable and contented state than the weaver who is subject to great fluctuations, even although such weaver should on the aggregate of the whole year receive a larger sum.

The weavers in most of the fabrics made of hemp and flax, as compared with the silk-weavers and the Norwich weavers, are in a greatly preferable condition; and they are protected by not being liable to competition from women and children; and their numbers are prevented from rising rapidly beyond the average amount of employment on the occasion of a great demand, by the difficulty of learning the trade.

There is one branch of their trade which any description of persons may at once learn to do, the weaving of sacking, and in that branch the wages are the lowest of all.

In a fabric made from hemp called drabbetts, cotton is used as the shute; and at Ipswich there are still a few looms, under half a dozen in number, employed in goods made solely from cotton, which is the last and sole remnant of the once extensive cotton weaving in this part of England.

I shall begin with reporting on Newark in Nottinghamshire, and then go to the several towns in other counties.

Newark, in Nottinghamshire.

There is only one manufacturing house, Messrs. Scales & Sons, employing weavers. From Mr. George Scales the following information was obtained:— The fabric is linen in the form of huckabacks, sheeting, shirting, table-cloths. The number of weavers is about 100. The system is for the manufacturer to build cottages adapted for weavers, and filled up with looms, and to let those cottages

cottages at a moderate weekly rental; and every weaver taking a house and not having a family to employ the looms, then sublets the use of looms and lodging to two or three other weavers, which renders his own rent moderate. There are 32 such cottages belonging to Messrs. Scales; the rent of most of them is 2*s.* 8*d.*; and the highest, which includes a good garden, is 3*s.* 3*d.* per week, and the rent is now collected weekly instead of quarterly, as was the case till within the last eighteen months. Experience has shown the propriety of shortening the period of credit.

The shops in the lower part of the house are a third part under ground, and the object is that the work in the looms may always be kept damp; hence sun and air must be excluded as much as possible.

Barnsley in Yorkshire is the leading place for this branch of trade, and the Newark prices rise or fall according as prices rise or fall at Barnsley.

There was in September last a brisk trade, and more weavers would have been employed if they could have been got. Mr. George Scales stated that the weavers who wove flax and hempen goods in the country places of the counties of Nottingham and Lincoln, and who were known under the denomination of custom weavers, were generally unfit for the fabrics at Newark, their mode of work being much too slovenly and unskilful.

The flax-weaving is an employment that requires the exertion of considerable strength, and is therefore fatiguing. There is also some dislike to the shops from their being partly under ground; and employments in the open air have a preference. The weaver certainly has this advantage, that in bad weather he is under shelter. He can work also his full time in the short days in winter, but that with many is not any attraction.

There is a description of narrow coarse goods to which children may be put, and after acquiring sufficient skill to make such goods well they might be put to a higher fabric, but in general the quantity of these narrow coarse goods was not so great as to afford to many children the means of learning the trade. Hence there is not a superabundant means of training weavers, and their number cannot on an emergency be increased without limit, except from a distance, as in the case of the Spitalfields and Norwich trades.

The work is too heavy for women in general, and hence the very small number of women in the trade. For the same cause there are very few boys or girls.

Men of little or no capital cannot set up in this trade from their inability to build the cottages for the weavers, and to furnish the looms and the accompanying reeds and gear. The looms are said to cost 4 *l.* or 5 *l.*, and some of them considerably more. The weaver finds only his own shuttle, brushes and picker. The fly-shuttle is used.

In some large manufacturing towns the cottages are built by persons not in the trade, and let to the manufacturers, and by them sublet to the weavers.

The trade is not independent of foreign orders, but altogether there is less fluctuation than in most other branches of manufacture.

The power-loom is partially in use at Barnsley, but not to a great extent. The material is not so elastic as either silk, cotton or wool, and the process of working by the power-loom is apt to break the threads of the warp. It is expected that this difficulty will be overcome, and that the power-loom will be brought into more general use. But as yet it is a matter of opinion.

There is a great temptation to the manufacturers to try to introduce the power-loom. At present, when an order comes requiring to be executed in a short time, there are not additional hands to be got to do it. The manufacturer is checked in giving employment to too many weavers, because in times when there is slackness of trade the men have not the means of paying the rent of his cottages, and hence the portion of his capital invested in cottages becomes unproductive. The manufacturer is induced to keep on working, and thus to lay up a stock in order to secure his rent.

It is not usual in this part of England for men, when in the receipt of high wages, to lay by for the future. About three or four years ago, when wages were exceedingly high in Nottingham, the work-people there indulged in luxuries and brought up poultry, ducks and geese, and rendered them exceedingly scarce in the markets of Newark, Lincoln, and other towns.

Great abuses prevailed under the former administration of the poor law, by persons in full employment on good wages at Newark getting sums as out-door relief. Happily the test of the offer of the Union house has afforded the means

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of ascertaining the sincerity of the complaints made, and these abuses no longer exist.

The weekly wages, as ascertained by an examination of the books, were found to average about 14 *s.* 6 *d.* The weaver has some expenses which are to be deducted to give the net earnings.

Newark.

Two of the weavers, Mr. George Cade and Mr. James Green, were examined. The information given by them corresponded in every thing excepting the amount of wages with that of Mr. George Scales, the manufacturer. They stated that there were 100 looms, and of these only seven or eight were worked by women, the labour being great. They knew that there was a demand for more weavers, but there was a dislike to the employment, partly on account of the confinement and working in the shops partly under ground, and also from the vexations of being without work in a period of slackness. They said that the railroads attracted many persons who otherwise would attempt to become weavers. There had not been much want of employment for some time past. They considered that a cotton weaver could not do their work, and that a man could not get his living at the trade until after his first year. The race of weavers was kept up by weavers' sons learning from their fathers.

In respect of earnings, they said that the utmost average was about 11 *s.* a week, after paying for winding quills, rent, and other expenses, and taking into account loss of time in waiting for work. Allowing for these deductions, and for the time when the men are not engaged at work, the average earnings are not far from that stated by Mr. Scales. Some fabrics pay better than others. The seven or eight women engaged in weaving were earning from 5 *s.* to 6 *s.* a week.

The Newark goods were not fancy goods depending on fashion, hence the trade was steady.

The most formidable enemies to them they considered to be the progress of machinery, and the cheaper working of the Scots. Their employer had two power-looms, but he had not yet succeeded well in the use of them, but they had no doubt he would at last do so. They understood that power-looms had answered in Scotland and Yorkshire. The cheap cotton goods made by machinery had done them much harm.

It was not unusual for three other weavers to work in the shop, and lodge in the house rented by a weaver, and to pay each 1 *s.* 6 *d.* for shop rent, lodging, and cooking. A journeyman also paid 2 *d.* out of every shilling of his earnings for the winding of the quills, and for brushes and dressing to his web. This account of the expenses of a journeyman was confirmed by Mr. Scales.

These weavers stated that they considered the life of an agricultural labourer preferable to theirs, and gave as a reason what their employer had mentioned for directly the opposite purpose, namely, that the agricultural labourer had but short hours in winter, as it was soon dark, after which he had nothing to do, and might go very early to bed.

Custom Weavers.

These domestic artizans were at one time numerous in the counties of Lincoln and Nottingham, and were employed to weave the yarn spun in private houses. Their number is now much reduced, there being far less domestic manufacture. The cheapness of cotton goods is considered the principal cause. Some custom-weavers employ themselves partly in agricultural labour and partly in weaving, that is, when any is to be obtained.

Dr. William Ellis of Caistor, in Lincolnshire, states, that there is a remnant of custom-weavers in that part of the country, but some of them have ceased on account of not obtaining employment, and others of them can get weaving for only a part of their time.

In a commercial point of view these men are totally insignificant, and can excite no interest but as a remnant of a body once very numerous in the generations now gone past.

Stamford, in Lincolnshire.

There is one manufacturer at Stamford. He is a large haberdasher and draper, and he employs a few looms not exceeding a score, and nearly all worked by women, for making goods which he vends in his own shop. The whole is on too small a scale to afford matter for reflection, or comparison with other places or with other branches of trade.

Diss, in Norfolk.

The only manufacturer giving out work is Mr. Henry Warne. He makes drabbetts, huckabacks, sheeting, and shirting. The number of persons employed is 63, being 40 men, 20 boys, and 3 women. Mr. Warne stated that he was anxious to increase the number of his weavers, but had not at that time succeeded. The fabrics are capable of being produced by the power-loom, but they have not as yet been made to such an extent by power as materially to affect the market.

Two workmen were examined, Mr. John Bradley, and Mr. Samuel Crick. The first of these is a veteran soldier, who was five years in the wars under the Duke of Wellington, and he is now one of the most industrious men in the country. He works from 15 to 16 hours a day regularly, which, deducting time for meals, is 13 to 14 hours, and he makes 16 *s.* a week in the gross, and deducting expenses has 14 *s.* net. He makes two chains a week, and is paid 8 *s.* a chain. The wife and foreman of Mr. Warne confirmed this account, but both agreed that two chains a week was more than men generally could possibly do, and that a chain and a half was the full average which most men could weave without destroying themselves. Occasionally men did more than even two chains, and sometimes two chains and a half, but unless the over-exertion was counterbalanced by rest afterwards, it would do serious injury.

Mr. Samuel Crick gave a similar account of the work done on the average. He himself did a chain and a half, making thereby 12 *s.*, and deducting 1 *s.* for winding his quills, 6 *d.* for starch, and 6 *d.* for candles, he had 10 *s.* clear; which was the usual amount of wages.

The wages earned for huckabacks, sheeting, and shirting, were about the same.

The work is rather heavy for women. The three engaged in it earn from 5 *s.* to 6 *s.* a week. That may be stated to be a little above the average price of female labour in the counties of Essex, Suffolk, and Norfolk.

Some of the men work in a large shop or factory. Mrs. Warne stated that the men who worked at their own houses gained most money. There was less companionship amongst them, and they were not so often led away from their work to spend money. There were instances of men earning on the average only very little from such irregularities.

The fly-shuttle running on wheels is employed in making drabbetts. The fabric is made at Barnsley in Yorkshire.

The wages earned at Diss exceed the wages earned at Haverhill. Mr. Crick has himself worked some years at that place, and he stated the cause of the inferior wages at Haverhill to be, that the Haverhill men would not work so many hours as the men at Diss; for the hours which they worked they did as well, the rate of payment being the same.

There are a few sacking weavers. They are old men, and are able to work to the value of about 7 *s.* a week.

The wages of the farm labourers near Diss are, some 8 *s.* a week and others 9 *s.*, but 9 *s.* is said to be the highest rate, and very few get it. The variation of the price of farm labour constantly ascertained, and within very short distances, is only to be accounted for by the abuses of the former poor-laws' system, which confined men to their own parishes, and caused great differences in the density of population.

North Lopham, in Norfolk.

It is delightful at last to have met with one green oasis in the vast desert of discontent in which the inquiries of this Commission have been conducted.

Three of the operatives, Messrs. Christopher Land, Michael Barman, and George

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George Shaw, who were sent for to the inn, on being asked how trade was going on with them, at once replied, "Pretty middling; we are pretty well off here. We are not as they are in many parts." These men, like the other weavers of North Lopham, were engaged in making shirting, sheeting, and table-linen. They stated that their net wages, after deducting expenses, were on the average 10 *s.* a week. The hours of labour are twelve hours, out of which two are to be deducted for meals, leaving ten hours in the loom. This length of time they declared to be the utmost that men in general could endure for a permanency. Occasionally, when an order was received, which must be executed by a given day if taken at all, the men, to oblige the master, worked even 16 or 18 hours; but such work rendered it necessary to have corresponding relaxation afterwards.

When inquiry was made of the number of weavers, they went over the names of every one in the place, and they amounted to fifty. The number of masters was in like manner found to be nine, and one in London. Two of these masters, Messrs. Coleby Cobb and George Shaw, joined the party, and all seemed happy and sociable together.

The material employed is hemp, which is raised in the counties of Norfolk and Suffolk. Some beautiful specimens of very fine thread were shown. It is spun by the hand in the neighbouring county, and the masters expressed regret that they could not get enough of it spun, and that they were obliged to get some from Yorkshire. The bleaching is done in the grass, and all parties entertained a very primitive horror of the employment of chemical compounds. The race of weavers is kept up by the fathers teaching their sons. Lads accustomed to the looms, and to winding quills, and handling the yarn from their early youth, readily learn weaving, but a man from field labour would be difficult to teach. The masters said, that if they were asked to take an apprentice they would not do it under 20 *l.*, and it would be necessary besides to pay 50 *s.* to the journeyman who taught the apprentice, to make up for his loss of time. This expense saves the trade from overwhelming ruinous competition.

The houses of North Lopham are distributed along both sides of the road, at some distance from each other, and frequently back in the fields. There is a neat and cheerful air about the place, which is pleasing to behold. The men seemed to be in a fine state of health.

The comfortable condition and content of the weavers of North Lopham may, in a considerable degree, be attributed to the regularity of their employment. If, instead of making a net income of 10 *s.* a week regularly all through the year, the wages had been sometimes 16 *s.*, at other times only 8 *s.*, and sometimes no work or wages at all, even if under these fluctuations the aggregate amount in 12 months had been greater than now, the weavers would have been comparatively wretched and would have been full of complaints. At the time when 16 *s.* a week were earned not one halfpenny would have been saved; the 6 *s.* earned above the ordinary present average would have been spent in additional drinking, to the injury of the constitution and deterioration of the moral habits of the weaver. On the other hand, when wages were very low, or when there was no work, there would have been a deficiency of the ordinary necessaries and comforts of life. The uniform rate of wages, though not high, supplies regularly all the weaver's wants, and in his retired village he sees no superior affluence to render him discontented with his own condition.

Sacking Weavers in Norwich.

The sacking weaving of Norwich is merely the expiring embers of a trade about to be extinguished.

Mr. John Bidwell gave evidence that he and three others gave out work. There were only about 50 weavers altogether in their branch. The earnings average about 8 *s.* a week. The weavers worked at a shop, and had no outgoings. The shop was open from six in the morning to eight at night, and the weavers took half an hour for breakfast, an hour for dinner, and half an hour for tea. The weavers had not constant employment, otherwise their average wages would be 9 *s.* a week.

In regard to the time required to learn this trade, Mr. Bidwell says, "A man may

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may begin at once to weaving, and get on slowly at first, and in a month he will be master of his business."

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It is obvious that the earnings of men in such a trade must of necessity be lower than those of a common labourer, the skill being so easily attained, and there being less physical strength required. As the hemp and flax trade is gone to Yorkshire and Dundee, the few here and there working all over the south of England are necessarily regulated in their earnings by the price paid for the work where it is done on a much larger scale.

Haverhill, in Suffolk.

Evidence of the state of the weavers of fabrics made of hemp, was given by Messrs. Jacob Bigmore, Frederick Webb, and John Mizon.

These weavers are employed in making drabbett, which is a fabric of which the warp is hemp thread, and the shute is of cotton. This cloth is used for smock frocks for farmers' men, and as undress for grooms and other gentlemen's servants; and it is often made into pantaloons. The hemp yarn comes from Leeds, and the coarse twill cotton yarn from Stockport.

Drabbetts had been made at Haverhill for about 25 years. Previously, fustians had been manufactured, a similar but finer fabric; a linen warp with cotton shute. Checks were also woven here of white and blue squares, but are not so now.

As lately as about 40 years ago, these weavers said that there were looms engaged in weaving woollen for the neighbouring farmers. At that time, they said the farmers' wives and daughters, after their day's work, amused themselves with spinning, but now it was with music; and the woollen manufacture has all but forsaken this part of England.

They estimated the number of looms in Haverhill at 450, of which there might be 150 worked by men, 100 by women, 100 by boys, and 100 by girls.

This is, however, only an approximation. The Rev. Robert Roberts, the clergyman, estimated the number of weavers at 400; being 330 for drabbetts, and 70 for silk.

There were eight masters who gave out work.

A web was about 40 yards in length, and was called a chain. A man could weave a chain in a week; some, by working over hours, might do a little more, but some did not do so much. Women, boys, and girls usually made about half a chain a week. The fly-shuttle is used in this fabric. The drabbetts are generally dyed of an olive, slate, or drab colour.

The price paid for weaving a chain of 40 yards of drabbett is 6 *s.*, 7 *s.*, or 8 *s.*, according to its fineness; but the weaver had to find his own loom and harness, and had also to defray the usual expenses for winding and candles, and also to find dressing to put on the warp.

Altogether they estimated the net earnings of the weaver, after deducting his expenses, to be about 6 *s.* a week.

The loom and harness they estimated to be worth 4 *l.* 4 *s.* The loom would last a man his life-time, but the cords of the harness required constant mending and renewing, and this expense they estimated at about 8 *s.* a year.

A dyer, they said, had 2 *s.* 6 *d.* a day, and some beer, but then he was often wet, and was at great expense for clothes and shoes.

A farmer's labourer they said had 7 *s.* a week, but then he had other advantages in a bit of ground, in growing potatoes and cabbages, and keeping a pig.

They complained grievously that the price of weaving had fallen within the last 10 years from 11 *s.* a chain down to its present price of 6 *s.*, 7 *s.*, or 8 *s.*

When asked why they submitted to work for so low wages, and did not take to any other employment, they pleaded their poverty. They had no club, no fund, which they might fall back upon, if they struck for wages. They could get no relief from the parish. They must take what was given to them. One man said that he had a wife and eight children, and if he were to hold out only for a week or two, his children would be crying for bread.

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About Christmas 1836, about 100 or more looms were out of work, but in general work was very steady. There was little or no "play" for cane or shute. They were not aware of any body out of work at that time.

Boys were still brought up to the trade. They knew it was contrary to the interest of the children, but inability, from poverty, to do better for them, was the excuse.

The masters usually travelled about the neighbouring country, and obtained orders for their goods.

The Reverend Robert Roberts, the clergyman, very obligingly conducted the Assistant-Commissioner to the houses of three of the drabbett manufacturers, and to the shops of some of the weavers.

The information given did not materially differ from that already stated. Two of the manufacturers were inclined to think that the weavers might do more work if they exerted themselves. One of these manufacturers was also disposed to charge the weavers with the vice of drunkenness, but the clergyman did not corroborate his statements.

From evidence subsequently obtained at Diss in Norfolk, there is good reason for believing that the weavers of Haverhill might do much more work if they exerted themselves. But as to drunkenness, the very small amount of wages which they earn puts that vice beyond their reach.

One of the manufacturers stated that the Act against the truck system was much evaded.

Ipswich, in Suffolk.

Manufacturing in this town is all but extinct. There is only one manufacturer, Mr. Solomon James, and he makes cotton goods. His establishment is now so small, as only to employ himself, another man, and three women in weaving. He stated that he had been in the trade 40 years at Ipswich, and formerly employed many more looms. He buys his cotton at Norwich, and makes it into checks and cloth for sailors' shirts. Women will work at from 8*d.* to 1*s.* a day. The trade in this part of the country has been injured or all but annihilated by the cheap goods made by the power-loom in the north. The cheap cotton goods he considers to have driven out of the market the articles made in Suffolk from flax and hemp. There is now only one sacking weaver in Ipswich, and there is, comparatively speaking, only a remnant of sacking weaving at Stowmarket.

There are no factories at Ipswich, and Mr. James considers the place very unfavourable from the unwillingness of the people to submit to order and confinement. The industry of the people was much hurt formerly by the too easy grant of parochial relief, but time may produce a favourable change.

On inquiry at a farm near Ipswich, the wages of the labourers were found to be about the same as near Colchester. For the harvest, 5 *l.* were given, and the labourer was engaged for five weeks certain. Three bushels of malt were allowed, but no hops. Whilst at this farm, the men came and asked for a largess. On inquiry, it was explained that the largess was an entertainment after the harvest was over, for the labourers and their wives. The farmers supply the eating, and the men raise money how they can for the drinking. The common farmers give the entertainment at their own houses, but gentlemen send their labourers to a public-house. During the entertainment a labourer rises, and shouts out with all his power of voice, "Largess! largess! largess!" The other labourers join in a chorus. The farmers' friends present then give money again.

This is a remnant of the customs of ages past.

In the more northern parts of the county of Suffolk the wages are lower. The ploughman has only 8*s.* a week, but he is kept in pay be the weather wet or dry. The jobbing labourer has 1*s.* 6*d.* a day, but is not constantly employed. The labourers'

labourers' wives in hay-time may get 1 *s.* a day, and a like sum in harvest. They are sometimes employed in weeding and in collecting stones from the fields at 6 *d.* and sometimes 8 *d.* a day. A scare-crow child, to frighten away the birds during seed-time and harvest, gets 3 *d.* a day.

Sacking and Floor-cloth Weaving: Reading in Berkshire.

Mr. William Harris, of the Hit or Miss beer-shop in Boarded-lane, a weaver in this branch, and a superintendent to a manufacturer, gave the following evidence:—

In the year 1815 there were as many as 11 masters and about 200 looms; now there are not 12 looms. The trade began to fall off in 1821, and has gradually become less and less, and when the old men, the present weavers, are gone, it is supposed this trade will be at an end in Reading. No person has learned the trade for years past. The price paid for weaving in 1815 was 2 ½ *d.* the square yard; this was reduced to 2 ¼ *d.*, and afterwards to 2 *d.* per square yard.

The sacking is three-quarters wide, or a little more. There is a great deal of time lost for want of regular employment.

There is now only one loom at work making floor-cloth. The web is six yards broad. There are looms which make floor-cloth eight yards wide, and even 10 yards wide.

The cause of the want of employment in this branch is inability to manufacture the goods, and come into the market at the same price as the manufacturers of Dundee. The local advantages of that town in obtaining the raw material, in spinning and weaving and sending the goods to market, are such as to leave no chance for competition. The remnant of the business still lingering in Reading is the supply of the neighbouring farmers with sacks. There is no remedy, and with the present race of weavers the trade becomes extinct.

Farnham, in Surrey.

The only manufacturer in this town is Mr. John Lidbetter, who makes hop bagging, painted canvass, sacks, sheeting, huckabacks, sail-cloth, and tarpawlings. The weavers all work in weaving-shops belonging to the establishment. It is only about 16 years ago that the manufacturing commenced at this place. A manufacturer at Reading was unfortunate in business, and several of his men removed to Farnham, and formed the nucleus of the present factory.

The most striking feature is the broad looms for weaving painted canvass or floor-cloth, which are 12 in number. Some of them are for webs 18 feet in breadth, others for webs of 24 feet in breadth, and some for webs of 30 feet in breadth. The length of a piece is about 324 feet. Two weavers are required, one on each side of the loom, to drive the shuttle and move the batten; and in addition, there is a boy at the middle of the batten who also assists in the work, and prevents the serpentine wriggling motion which might otherwise take place. The shuttle runs upon wheels, and there are wheels at the side to aid the motion. The men engaged at the broad looms are valuable workmen, and it is important not to lose them. Hence in a slack time, when there is not sufficient demand to employ them all at broad loom weaving, they are put to the narrow looms, and are thus kept ready to do the better work when required. This work is far better paid than the other weaving.

As to the narrow looms, the fabric is so easily made, that men may be taken from any other employment and in a few days be made tolerable workmen. The wages of such men must necessarily be low, in fact below the wages of agricultural labourers.

Of the twelve broad looms in the factory, three were unemployed in the beginning of July 1838. The men, however, had not been discharged, but had work at the narrow looms.

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There are 24 narrow looms, of which 10 were unemployed.

There is no weaving done at the houses of the weavers. In summer, the factory is open from five in the morning to seven, or later, in the evening, but there is no restraint on the men; they come and go when they like.

No women are engaged in weaving. The work would be very fatiguing for them. The trade at Farnham labours under much disadvantage. The yarn has to be brought from Dundee, and there is an overland carriage by the waggon of 40 miles from London. The manufactured goods which are sold in London again are subjected to the cost of being sent thither, and on such heavy articles the expense of carriage is an important consideration.

There is one article in which there is a decided advantage, that is hop bagging. The town is the very centre of a rich hop district. The consumer, therefore, is close at hand. The hop bagging is made very substantial. As it is the custom when the hops are sold to pay by the pound of the gross weight, hops and bag together, the hop grower has no interest in using a slight fabric.

Sacking is sold chiefly amongst the neighbouring farmers. It may be stated generally of many of the counties in the east and south of England, that a few sacking weavers distributed here and there, derive exclusively their employment from the demand of the agriculturists around them, and their goods can hardly be said to come into the general market.

There is a checked fabric made, which resembles carpeting. It is from jute or India hemp. It is spun at Rumsey, of threads, if we may so call them, half the thickness of the little finger. The material is brought from Dundee, having there undergone the process of dyeing with very vivid colours.

Sheeting or huckabacks are made here, but only in a small quantity. The cloth, after coming from the loom, is sent to Carshalton to be bleached.

From the great quantity of goods of these fabrics made in Yorkshire, and more particularly at Dundee and in the neighbouring country, the manufacturer in this part of England is completely controlled as to the price which he can obtain, and the wages which he can afford to pay.

If the pecuniary condition of the sacking weavers of Yorkshire and of Scotland be raised, the south of England will participate in the good; but otherwise nothing can be done, and it will be with extreme difficulty that any part of the trade can be retained.

The weavers at Farnham are not united into a benefit club, but they have a society amongst them for the relief of trampers, or men of the trade travelling the country in search of employment. A tramper receives in money 2 *s.* 6 *d.*, also a pot of beer, and a bed for the night.

In the case of a weaver's death there is a subscription of 1 *s.* each to defray the funeral expenses, and the whole fraternity attend, wearing white aprons, on which are emblems of the trade.

Laying by a portion of their earnings to meet the evil of a future day is a practice quite unknown.

Men do not hesitate to marry, although it may be necessary to obtain money from their employer to defray the expenses of the ceremony.

Intemperance in drink, as is but too much the case every where, is the besetting frailty.

If a man, from having been engaged in putting starch on the warp, is promoted to work at the loom, he has to pay the other weavers a guinea. How the guinea is spent any one may guess.

It is the custom to pay all the people employed early on Saturday, to enable their wives to make their market during the day, and be prepared for the proper observance of the Sabbath.

Sacks are made up by women at the moderate rate of 10 for 8 *d.*

REMEDIES.

Spitalfields.

Report from *J. Mitchell*, Esq. LL. D.

As introductory to the important subject of the remedies of the distress of the weavers more particularly of Spitalfields, I now report on the operations of a remedy attempted by the Legislature nearly 70 years ago, for the distress which existed at that period, by an Act for the regulation of wages, called the Spitalfields Act. As part of this subject, will be an account of the periods of distress whilst the Act was in force, and of the periods of distress since the Act was repealed, and also of the progress of the silk trade, which it will be seen has, under every state of legislative enactment, gradually advanced. Connected with this subject is the enactment of a duty on thrown silk, a duty on raw silk, and the collection of the duties on foreign manufactured silk goods.

Spitalfields Act, 13 George III. c. 68.

The Spitalfields Act for the regulation of the prices of silk-weaving in Spitalfields and the vicinity of London, was passed in 1773, and continued in force till 1824, being upwards of 50 years. It is one of the most remarkable instances of legislative interference in fixing the price of labour; and in all inquiries in London, and 60 miles round it, relative to the condition of the hand-loom weavers, this Act is constantly referred to, and the weavers, with exceedingly few exceptions, speak of it as their Magna Charta, which they have lost, and to the restoration of the principle of which, under some modifications, they fondly look as the only means of re-establishing their prosperity.

Mr. Joseph Roquez was very young when the Act passed, but he has a distinct recollection of the state of Spitalfields at that time. He remembers to have been told the causes why this law was made:—

"Many masters were disposed to pay low wages, and the masters inclined to pay good wages were undersold by others. Many disturbances took place; depredations were committed, and some weavers were executed at Tyburn in 1768, and two at Bethnal Green in 1770. A person of the name of Clark, who was discovered to have been the informer, was dragged to a pond, and thrown in, and was pelted to death. This was in Hare-street Fields, on which Waterloo Town is now built. Two persons were executed for this in 1771.

"Soon after several masters and men united together, and took measures to obtain an Act of Parliament to regulate wages, and to give an authority to the magistrates of the county of Middlesex, and of the Tower Hamlets, and the Lord Mayor and Aldermen of London, to decide in fixing the scale of wages. The Act came into force in 1773. Several Acts to amend this Act passed afterwards."

The two men who suffered in 1770 were punished in consequence of having been active leaders in a riot in Brick-lane, when it became necessary to call out the soldiers, and life was lost on both sides.

The mode in which the Spitalfields Act operated was this: the manufacturers on one side chose their committee, and the weavers chose their committee; then the two committees negociated together, and endeavoured to come to an agreement as to the wages to be paid in different fabrics. When they did so agree, the duty of the magistrates at the Quarter Sessions was easy. They had only to order what was already settled, and the magistrates of three jurisdictions always agreed to the same thing.

Cases, however, occurred in which the two parties did not agree, and then the magistrates heard counsel and evidence, and decided. As to the fabrics, and the propriety of one price or another for making them, it was not easy for the magistrates to judge. It is stated that they confined themselves to inquiry as to the price of provisions, and what the weaver could earn, and decided accordingly. They are represented as recommending the masters to retire, and consider as to the demands of the weavers, and come before them again. The hint

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generally proved sufficient. Some of the witnesses have stated, that the magistrates always decided in favour of the weavers. Mr. William Hale states, in his evidence before the Parliamentary Committee, that in one instance, and one only, it was otherwise. It is in the nature of things, and in accordance with universal experience, that magistrates shall decide on the popular side, and be prone to exercise a liberality which is not at their own expense.

The orders of the magistrates were advertised in the newspapers at the time. In 1784 these orders were collected into a "book." This book, which is printed in a small type, has eight pages of a preface, and 55 pages of prices. This is the first book. The last book, published after the last order of the magistrates, consists of a preface and 80 pages of lists of fabrics and of the several subdivisions, and the prices for each. The book from time to time was partially altered. As new fabrics were introduced, the price for weaving them was settled, and introduced into the book. As fabrics went into total disuse, the prices of making them were left out in the subsequent editions.

In 1795, there being a rise in the prce of provisions, on appeal to the magistrates, a rise in the price of weaving was ordered.

In 1805 and 1806 provisions being still higher than in 1795, there was another rise in the price of weaving.

Of the general effect of the Act, Mr. Roquez gives an opinion, in which almost all the weavers, and some of the masters, will heartily concur:—

"It was most beneficial to all parties. The masters were not afraid of laying up goods in their warehouses. They knew they could not be undersold. Prices could not go down, and no man could produce similar goods without giving the same wages. Hence they were safe, and were not afraid to lay up a few thousand pounds worth in a slack time."

No alteration in the book took place after 1806. The prices of provisions fell; but the book was still the same.

If the trade of manufacturing silk had never gone beyond Spitalfields, and if all foreign silk goods had been successfully excluded, the Act might have been considered beneficial to masters and men. But some years before 1824, the silk trade had penetrated into other parts of the Kingdom. In Braintree, Colchester, Sudbury, Reading, and many other places within sixty miles of London, silk goods were woven at a price one-third less than the price in Spitalfields. The trade had also penetrated to the north of England and to Scotland.

Against rivals so formidable, who were able to bring their goods into the market at a cheaper rate, it was in vain for Spitalfields to contend. The repeal of the Act became inevitable.

In addition to all this, the Government had determined to remove the prohibition from foreign goods. To expose Spitalfields to foreign competition, with the book prices to contend against, was total ruin. This was an additional reason for the repeal of the Act.

The Act was accordingly repealed by 5 Geo. IV. c. 66, and ceased to be law in 1824, and foreign goods were admitted in 1826.

For some of the fabrics of Spitalfields, as the bandanas, bombazines, crapes, persians, shawls, damasks, the repeal came too late. When a trade is once lost, it is a most difficult thing to recover it back from the persons who have got possession of it. The fabrics which have left Spitalfields, have never returned.

The period of the authority of the Spitalfields Act was far from being that of unmixed prosperity, as is now to be shown.

Periods of Distress before the Repeal of the Spitalfields Act.

The Spitalfields Act secured to the weavers a fixed price for their labour; but no Act of Parliament could secure to them full employment; and when, from the caprices of fashion, or from any other cause, there ceased to be a demand for the goods, a part of the weavers who made them were necessarily out of employment; and such of them as had not laid by some of their earnings to meet an evil day, were in distress. There was, however, this difference between the periods of distress in those times and the distress at present, that whatever work was given out, was paid for at the full price; and when a demand for goods and for labour arose, the weavers returned to a state of prosperity; whereas distress now may occasion reduction of wages, and when full employment returns, the weaver is not paid as he was before.

Mr.

Mr. John Poyton recollects much distress in 1793, which was said to be caused by a transition from peace to war; some thousands were out of employment; and those who were employed, had only half work, or much less than they could have done. There was distress also in 1795. In 1803 there was distress, not from want of employment, but from the high price of provisions. In 1808 great distress was felt in consequence of the interruption of commerce by the Berlin and Milan decrees, which caused such a scarcity of silk, that it sold for more than its weight in silver. In 1812 there was distress:

"That was attributed principally to there not being a young Queen to hold drawing-rooms, and promote fashionable expenditure in silk. A memorial was sent to the Prince Regent, setting out the cause of distress, and praying him to promote the trade, by holding drawing-rooms. He did interfere, and it had a very desirable effect."

In 1815 and 1816 there was distress, which was attributed to a transition from war to peace.

From that time down to the repeal of the Spitalfields Act there were fluctuations, arising from the change of the fashions, but these were not of any great extent.

All witnesses agree, that the distress of former days was not nearly so severe as the distress felt since the repeal of the Spitalfields Act, and the introduction of foreign silk goods, and such seems to be the fact. On that head I have now to report.

Periods of Distress since the Repeal of the Spitalfields Act.

The repeal of the Spitalfields Act in 1824 did not produce any effect for the first 12 months, there being full employment for the weavers, and at the book prices. Mr. Poyton attributes this to the reduction of the duties on the importation of raw silk to merely a penny on the pound weight, and the great reduction on the importation of thrown silk, and the manufacturers and merchants, in consequence, receiving back from Government large sums in consideration of the duties paid on the stock in hand, which sums enabled them to have their full share in the speculations of that extraordinary period in commercial affairs.

The great commercial panic took place in the end of 1825, and of the distress produced by this crisis, the weavers largely participated. Means were taken to ascertain the number of looms out of employment, and it was *estimated* to be from 7,000 to 8,000. Matters got still worse in the course of 1826, and it was not till far through 1827 that there was full employment. Wages began to fall in the end of 1825, and continued to fall, year after year, to 1831. There have been some partial reductions since. Altogether the wages now are not above two-thirds what they were before the repeal of the Act. The fluctuations of employment are of more frequent occurrence to the weaver.

Formerly the manufacturer could venture, in slack times, to lay up a stock of goods, knowing that his neighbour could not make his goods at a lower price, and undersell him. Formerly a stock of goods could be prepared in anticipation of the season in London; now the manufacturer has not confidence to do so, being in dread of his goods being left on his hand by the importation of foreign silk goods, which may gain the favour of the fashionable world. The Spitalfields manufacturer is therefore obliged to wait for an order, and when one order is completed, he dare not make more goods until a further order be received; and in the meantime the weaver, although said to be employed, is earning nothing to support himself and family.

The distress which the weavers now experience is not caused by a diminution of the silk trade throughout the Kingdom; on the contrary, I shall now show that it has very largely increased.

Progress of the Silk Trade.

The chief sources of the supply of silk which is manufactured in the United Kingdom, are China and Bengal. Silk is also obtained from Italy and Turkey, and some other countries.

The import of silk from China has increased at a wonderful rate of progression. The quantities imported year by year from China, for the last thirteen years, have been received from Mr. Alderman White, a gentleman who has had

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the best means of information, having bought and sold silk together to the extent of eight millions sterling, within the last five years. Silk is imported in bales, some of which are as low as 101 lbs. weight, and some as high as 112 lbs., but 105 lbs. may be taken as the average weight.

The importations were as follows :—

Years.	Bales.	Assuming the Bales at 105 lbs. each.
1825	1,691	177,555
1826	3,917	411,285
1827	2,749	288,645
1828	2,806	294,630
1829	6,336	665,280
1830	4,842	508,410
1831	5,053	530,565
1832	8,337	875,385
1833	5,884	617,820
1834	9,531	1,000,755
1835	7,858	825,090
1836	13,063	1,371,615
1837	18,429	1,935,045

If the last twelve years be divided into three periods, of four years each, the imports in these three periods will be,—

Bales.	Pounds.
15,808	1,659,840
23,616	2,479,680
48,881	5,132,505

The rapidity of increase is amazing ; yet the experienced Alderman ventures to foretell, that in the course of the next seven years the increase will be full 50 per cent. above the import of 1837.

The Alderman attributes the amazing increase of the imports from China to the deliverance of the trade from the shackles of the East India Company, and further to a juster appreciation of the quality of China raw silk. "There is," he states, "a very great diversity in the quality of the China silk. Much the larger portion is inferior to the Italian silk ; but there is also some China silk of a quality not to be surpassed, and for some purposes it is preferred by the manufacturers. It is most beautifully translucent, bright and clear. In short, the best and finest qualities are much in request for the gauzes made in Scotland, and most of the staple fabrics ; whilst the coarse and round sorts are peculiarly and especially adapted to the manufacture of hose, gloves and other articles."

The silk of this excellent quality is limited in the supply ; but it is increasing ; "and from the encouragement of the price given for it in the market, the production must greatly increase. From having at first been used merely as a substitute for Italian silk, it is now an indispensable article for certain fabrics."

Of the silk imported from Bengal, the details for the last thirteen years have been obtained from the same witness. A bale of Bengal silk will average 150 lbs.

Years.	Company.	Private Trade.	Total.	Total in lbs.
1825			6,237	935,550
1826			8,410	1,261,500
1827			6,998	1,049,700
1828			7,706	1,155,900
1829			10,310	1,546,500
1830	7,444	1,282	8,726	1,308,900
1831	6,950	525	7,475	1,121,250
1832	5,085	1,471	6,556	983,400
1833	4,720	449	5,169	775,350
1834	5,118	1,138	6,256	938,400
1835	4,886	2,023	6,809	1,021,350
1836	2,340	5,759	8,099	1,219,850
1837	540	7,212	7,752	1,162,800

We

We may mention the East India Company imported in

1773	- - - - - - - - - - -	998 bales.
1774	- - - - - - - - - - -	1,423
1783	- - - - - - - - - - -	4,074
1784	- - - - - - 1,149,394 lbs., or	7,662

The Company and private trade together imported from India, in

1800	- - - 583,086 pounds	- - -	3,887 bales.
1810	- - - 577,326	- - - -	3,849
1820	- - - 1,078,671	- - - -	7,191
1823	- - - 1,218,661	- - - -	8,124

The import of Bengal silk has by no means corresponded with the import of China silk, which is thus accounted for: "India is a very poor country, and the ryots of India were able to grow silk chiefly by the help of advances from the East India Company; but from the time that the Company ceased to be a trading body, such advances were not made, and consequently from poverty the cultivation is diminished."

"Private capital will in time take place of the capital of the Company, and there will be an immense increase. Had it not been for the benumbing influence of the Company's monopoly, the import of silk from Bengal would have been ten times as great as at present, and greatly improved in quality, and, instead of being behind some countries in the silk manufacture, we should have been the great emporium of the world for the raw commodity, and as far before other countries in the manufacture of silk, as we are in that of cotton."

The Bengal silk is not of a good quality, and of late years has not been improving. This Mr. Alderman White attributes to "the stifling influence of monopoly, and attempting to do by a Government what can be done so much better by individual enterprise. For the last 15 or 20 years the silk of every other country has been improving: that of Bengal has been standing still, or going back. Even ignorant and superstitious Spain, barbarous and besotted Turkey, all have been improving by individual enterprise, in spite of obstructions and heavy imposts by the Government. But the Company's imports of later years were of worse quality than they were twenty years ago, and the major part of the good qualities which of late years has been imported, has been the result of private enterprise, despite of the right of pre-emption claimed by the Company, and all other obstacles to the successful development of industry."

Some manufacturers, entertaining opposite views to Mr. Alderman White on the policy of the duties on Italian thrown silk, and the bounties on export silk, were desirous to give evidence, in opposition to him; and, as preliminary, they gave their opinions about China and Bengal silk: respecting the China silk, Mr. Ambrose Moore, a large manufacturer of Spitalfields, who has had the experience of 30 years, has given the following opinion:—

"I think China silk is very good in its nature, is capable of much improvement, and is already an important source of supply to the British manufacturer. It is well adapted for the inferior classes of silk goods, both broad silks and ribands. It will take a clearer colour of white than other silks, and, therefore, is best for white sarsnets, hosiery, Persians, and some other low-priced silk goods, where such colour is desirable; but it is quite unfit for the finer and richer description of goods, whether plain or figured, such as are made in Spitalfields, to compete with the rich goods of France."

He further states:—

"I have seen no China silk which will nearly equal the Italian silk, either as to fineness, clearness or evenness of thread; and unless we can have free access into the interior of China, I see no prospect of obtaining the necessary improvements in its preparation. The Chinese do not know the purposes for which the several kinds of silk are to be used, and they do not reel their silks in such a manner as to adapt them to the purpose of weaving superior goods, or to enable a throwster to work them with the ease with which they might be, if they were reeled in the way that Italian silks are."

Of Bengal silk, Mr. Moore entertains a less favourable opinion:—

"I consider Bengal silk in every respect as inferior to the silk of China, both as to its original nature and the manner in which it is reeled. I think its nature

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such, that it never could be made equal to the silk of Italy, nor could it be adapted for the manufacturer of rich goods. Bengal silk is, however, of much importance to the manufacturers of this country, for making the inferior descriptions of goods, sewing silk, Bandanas, sarsnets, Persians, common black ribands, trimmings and various other sorts; also for goods made of a mixture of silk and wool, or silk and cotton, I consider it, however, capable of much improvement in its mode of preparation; but in comparison of Italian silks, it is as much inferior as the Yorkshire wool is to the fine wools of Saxony."

Mr. John Ballance, who has been a manufacturer for 30 years of the fine silk goods which come into competion with the goods of Lyons, says:—"They cannot be manufactured from India silks, either China or Bengal. We are entirely dependent on the silks of Italy for the production of these fabrics."

A large manufacturer from the north of England, and Member of Parliament, who accompanied Mr. Moore and Mr. Ballance, expressed his coincidence in opinion with them. He had previously given his evidence to another Assistant Commissioner, and, therefore, it was unnecessary to repeat it.

On comparing the evidence of these gentlemen with that of Mr. White, relative to the qualities of China and Bengal silk, there is evidently more a difference of feeling as to the inferences to be drawn, than a discrepancy as to facts; and as to the anticipations for the future, time will before many years decide between them. Mr. White says of the Bengal silk,—

"The soil and climate are decidedly favourable. Four to six distinct crops or raccolte may be obtained in one year; whereas, in Lombardy or France only one crop can be obtained; and the temperature of Bengal is, moreover, very favourable for making the best kinds of silk. Eggs of the China worm should be regularly introduced, to prevent deterioration of quality, and the better sorts of the mulberry-tree also. With capital and skill, India will soon be able to produce silk of equal quality to that of France or Italy, and at a much lower cost, for obvious reasons. Nor is it too much to expect that as many as 12 crops may be obtained annually by the reproduction, forcing, retardation of the seven or eight known sorts of worms, and hence, by continuous and regular employ, the attainment of such skill by the reelers in Bengal as cannot fail to equal, if not surpass, that of the reelers of Italy or France, who ordinarily are occupied in reeling barely one-fourth of the year, whilst the remaining three-fourths are devoted to the common agricultural labour. What may be done in India may be judged of by what has been done in France, under comparative disadvantage. The best sorts of mulberry and the China worm have been introduced; the latter as early as 1803, owing to a premium of 10,000 francs, which, in 1802, was offered by Napoleon for its introduction. The obtainer of this reward, M. Bonnard, of Alais, in the department of the Cevennes, was thus the means of much benefiting the interest of the silk manufacture of France; at the same time imparted a high character to the silks of that district, which they still maintain. Indeed, white raw silk is there reeled of a brilliancy of colour and beauty, besides fineness of quality, so as quite to surpass any thing which has yet been imported from the Celestial Empire."

As to the expense of transport, notwithstanding the great distance, it is about one-fourth that from Italy to London.

The Italian raw silks imported during the last eight years have been as follows, in bales, and each bale may be averaged at 250 lbs.:—

YEARS	BALES.	POUNDS.
1830 - - - -	4,558	1,139,500
1831 - - - -	3,784	946,000
1832 - - - -	3,856	964,000
1833 - - - -	5,279	1,319,750
1834 - - - -	2,750	687,500
1835 - - - -	4,728	1,184,000
1836 - - - -	4,137	1,039,250
1837 - - - -	2,466	616,500

If we divide these eight years into two periods of four years each, the quantities will be,—

Bales.	Pounds.
17,477	4,369,250
14,081	3,520,250

The import of thrown silk from Italy in the same two periods has been,—

Bales.	Pounds.
6,286	1,571,500
4,140	1,035,000

The imports of silk from Turkey and all other countries are small in amount, and inferior in quality, and the particulars therefore need not be given.

The following summary view of the importation of silk, for 70 years, is extracted from Porter's "Progress of the Nation," vol. i. p. 254.

Average Importation.

	Raw.	Waste.	Thrown.	Total.
	lbs.	*lbs.*	*lbs.*	*lbs.*
1765, 6 and 7, commencement of prohibition	352,000	- -	363,000	715,000
1785, 6 and 7, twenty years after prohibition	544,000	- -	337,000	881,000
1801 to 1812	760,000	- -	350,000	1,110,000
1815, 16 and 17, first years of peace, and fifty years after prohibition was commenced	1,095,000	27,000	293,000	1,415,000
1821, 22 and 23, three last years prior to the change of system	1,970,000	74,000	355,000	2,399,000

Years.	Raw.	Waste.	Thrown.	Total.
	lbs.	*lbs.*	*lbs.*	*lbs.*
1814	1,504,235	29,234	586,505	2,119,974
1815	1,069,596	27,971	377,822	1,475,389
1816	873,414	4,162	210,758	1,088,334
1817	1,343,051	49,055	294,553	1,686,659
1818	1,444,881	86,940	391,166	1,922,987
1819	1,446,097	71,331	331,125	1,848,553
1820	1,622,799	94,883	309,953	2,027,635
1821	1,864,513	105,047	360,248	2,329,808
1822	1,993,764	64,921	382,878	2,441,563
1823	2,051,895	52,362	363,864	2,468,121
1824	3,414,520	133,257	463,271	4,011,048
1825	2,848,506	195,910	559,642	3,604,058
1826	1,964,188	- - -	289,325	2,253,513
1827	3,759,138	- - -	454,015	4,213,153
1828	4,162,550	- - -	385,262	4,547,812
1829	2,719,962	- - -	172,239	2,892,201
1830	3,771,969	485,013	436,535	4,693,517
1831	3,035,832	762,258	514,240	4,312,330
1832	3,391,721	651,594	329,932	4,373,247
1833	3,838,795	654,381	268,367	4,761,543
1834	3,346,751	1,009,932	165,768	4,522,451
1835	4,151,008	1,382,872	254,578	5,788,458

In the years 1826 to 1829, the waste is included with the raw silk.

Duty on Thrown Silk.

The duty on organzine imported into the Kingdom is 3*s.* 6*d.* per pound, on tram it is 2*s.* per pound, and on singles is 1*s.* per pound.

For the information of persons not acquainted with the silk manufacture, a definition of these terms may be given.

Singles are the single fibres of the raw silk, twisted or twined on themselves.

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When the fibres are not twisted, the silk is called dumb single; but when singles are spoken of, the fibres twisted single or twined on themselves are always understood.

Tram is two or more fibres of the raw silk put together, and slightly twisted. Tram is used as shute in weaving.

Organzine is two singles twisted together, that is, two fibres of raw silk, each previously twisted on itself, now twisted together into one. Sometimes, but very seldom, three singles are twisted together, to form organzine.

It will be seen that the higher duties are levied on the silks on which the greater amount of labour has been bestowed.

The whole, or almost the whole, of the thrown silk imported, comes from Italy.

During the last eight years the import of organzine and tram, according to the evidence of Mr. Alderman White, has been,—

1830	1,776 bales, at 250 lbs. per bale; this would be	-	444,000 lbs.
1831	2,780	-	695,000
1832	749	-	187,250
1833	981	-	245,250
1834	783	-	195,750
1835	937	-	234,250
1836	1,654	-	413,500
1837	766	-	191,500

Of the above, the singles may not amount to above a bale or two per annum, the tram to about one-sixth of the whole, and the organzine will make the whole of the rest.

The fine Italian organzine forms the warp for the best broad silk and Norwich goods; the coarser organzine is used for Coventry ribbons and ordinary goods

The import of silk from Italy, in a thrown state, according to the evidence of this most experienced and intelligent witness, does not arise either from superior skill, excellence of machinery, or cheapness of labour in Italy.

"These are not the reasons. The Italian throwster is not more skilful than the British throwster, and no machinery surpasses British machinery; and although wages per week may appear much less than British wages, yet, when we take into account the amount of labour done by a British workman within the same time, the difference in wages is far less than at first view appears. The cause of the import of Italian thrown silk is this: much of it is made from a superior description of raw silk, which is produced in the dominions of the King of Sardinia, and he will not allow that silk to be exported in a raw state. He considers that other countries must have this silk for their best manufactures, and he is resolved that his subjects shall have the employment and profit of first converting it into fine warp or organzine, before he will allow it to be exported. In time it may confidently be expected we shall have as good silk from China and Bengal, and then we shall be independent of Sardinia. The raw silk which we import from Italy is not of the same quality as that from which the people of Piedmont make their organzine. We, however, do have some raw silk from the kingdom of Sardinia, principally white, called Novi, and is the product of the duchy of Genoa, which has the sole privilege of exporting raw."

It will be observed, that during the first four years of the preceding account, the bales imported were 6,286, but in the second four years only 4,140, being less than two-thirds of the preceding quantity.

The money raised by the duty on thrown silk is not applied for the purposes of public revenue, but forms a fund for a bounty on exportation of manufactured silk goods. The fact, however, is, that goods made from the Italian thrown silk are seldom exported, and accordingly the importers having paid the duty, and received debentures to the same amount, payable on the exportation of an equal weight of manufactured silk, sell those debentures to merchants who export silk goods. The goods exported are generally of a cheap description, and of a plain fabric. The debentures have varied much in price, but for some time past the average price of the 3*s.* 6*d.* debenture has been 2*s.* 3*d.*

The real effect of the 3*s.* 6*d.* duty, then, is, that the finer silk goods of Spitalfields and Norwich are taxed 1*s.* 3*d.* per pound on the Italian thrown silk used as raw material, to raise a fund to supply a bounty for the exportation of a coarser fabric, and this system is accompanied with the expense of working it, and the

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profit which the manufacturer must lay on for the use of the capital employed in paying the tax. "In addition to all these evils, which are common to all indirect taxes," says Mr. Alderman White, "there is this peculiar evil, that it is a tax on the leading material of an important manufacture, and necessary to support its reputation, and not only raises the price on that material itself, but on all the other materials from other countries employed in the trade. Whatever raises the price of Italian organzine, immediately raises the price of Italian raw silk, and of China, Bengal and Turkey silks; and whatever lowers the price of Italian organzine, lowers the price of all other silks also.

"Will you explain how this is brought about?—The rationale may be readily given, and I would put it thus:—Italian organzine is the ordinary or staple article employed in the fabrication of goods of the best quality, and is used as the warp or web, and hence its price or value mainly affects the cost of these fabrics, and of necessity determines the price of inferior fabrics made from Turkey, China or Bengal silk, which, under ordinary circumstances, cannot fail to be relatively proportionate. As wheat is the food of our people, its price governs or regulates the price of oats, rye, potatoes, and other lower costed or inferior aliments; so Italian organzine, the main pabulum of our silk manufacture, governs or regulates the price of all other inferior or lower costed materials consumed. But, let it be observed, that whatever may be argued about the rationale, the fact itself, that a rise in the price of Italian organzine ordinarily raises the price of all other silks, and *vice versâ*, is well known to every man in the trade, and is altogether beyond dispute; and it will, moreover, be borne in mind, that our consumption of silk has of late years trod on the heels of the supply. Further to illustrate the matter,

	£.	*s.*	*d.*
Suppose that Italian organzine, after paying the duty, cost per lb.	1	6	9
The importer sells his debenture, say for	–	1	9
Hence the silk costs him, per lb.	1	5	–
If there had been no duty of 3*s.* 6*d.* per lb., he would have had the silk at 1*s.* 9*d.* a lb. less	–	1	9
That is at per lb.	1	3	3

Now, in the present state of things, a man will give 20*s.* for a pound of Italian silk, and will get it thrown for 5*s.* a pound, making 25*s.*, because for some articles, even if at a higher price, he prefers British thrown organzine; but if he could buy Italian organzine for 23*s.* 3*d.*, which he might have done but for the duty, he would not have given 20*s.* for the raw silk, but only 18*s.* 6*d.* Therefore, if the duty were taken off, Italian raw silk would go down; and if Italian raw silk fell, then China silk, and Bengal silk, and Turkey silk, would go down at the same time; as, for instance, China raw silk to make a 40 to 45 denier organzine, which would be worth 18*s.*, would then only bring 16*s.* 6*d.*; and the Bengal silk of 15*s.* per lb., would then ordinarily rate at most not more than 14*s.* The Bengal silk of 10*s.* a lb. would be relatively worth not more than 9*s.*; so that altogether, by our unwise tax on organzine, we burthen ourselves also with paying a sum of at least 350,000*l.* a year, which goes to the silk-growers of China and other countries; and, what is more important, of such artificial augmentation, fully three-fourths goes into the pockets of foreign growers, at the expense and detriment of the English consumer—and for what? To encourage, forsooth, an export trade, which last year amounted to only 494,569*l.*; and this amount is not wholly silk goods, but includes a great portion of goods containing a little silk mixed with cotton, worsted, and other materials in value fully one-third of the whole export.

"It must be remembered that the augmented price is paid upon upwards of 4,000,000 lbs. of raw silk, and that such raw silk loses at least one-fourth in the manipulations of its conversion into goods. The knowledge of this fact will force the conviction of the wretched impolicy of this impost."

The manufacturers already noticed, have expressed a very different opinion on the effect of the duties on thrown silk.

Mr. Ambrose Moore says, "I consider them beneficial to the manufacturers, as they attract to our market the raw silks of Italy. If it were not for the

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duties, the Italians would be induced to throw their raw silk in their own country, and consequently would build more thrown mills: and the throwing of fine silk in this country would be destroyed; and the price of Italian organzines, instead of being lowered to the English manufacturer, would be enhanced, and not only Italian organzines, but the same effect would be produced on all silks, whether thrown or raw, or whether those of Italy or China or Bengal; because much less Italian raw silk would come to our market, and the competition between Italian and China and Bengal raws being thus withdrawn, the supply of silk here would be less abundant, and the best means of obtaining it at a low-price competition would be taken away.

"There is also a great advantage to the silk manufacturer in the silk coming in the raw state, as he can much better select the silk which will suit his manufacture, than he can after the silk is thrown, which to a certain degree disguises its quality.

"There is now a duty in Italy of 9*d.* per pound on the export of raw silk; and if the British duties on thrown silk were taken off, the Italian government might lay an increased duty on the exportation of raw silk, and most probably would do so. At present this country is the only market for Italian raw silk, and the Italians are dependent upon us to take it; but if we take off the duty on thrown silk, the case will be reversed; we shall become dependent upon them.

"If the Italians were to throw nearly all their own silk, the whole silk of Italy would then be in a state as suitable for the markets of Berlin, Vienna and St. Petersburg, as for that of England, and ours would be worse supplied than it now is. They are compelled to send their silk in a raw state to our market, because, from the effect of our import duties, it is not their interest to establish mills to throw it; and our market is the only one which takes the silk in an unthrown state.

"If throwing-mills in great number were established in Italy, they might also throw the coarse silks of China and Bengal, and we should lose the whole of our throwing trade. The effect would be, the increase of the price of silk in this country; consequently, such a diminution to the profits of the manufacturer, that he could not carry on his trade to nearly the same extent, and the employment of the hand-loom weaver would be much diminished. I do not think that the manufacturer could long survive the loss of the throwing. Would the hand-loom weavers of cotton be benefited if the spinning of cotton were discouraged in this country, and they had to rely on receiving cotton twist from abroad?

"It is a great disadvantage to the manufacturer to be obliged to select his silk in a thrown or prepared, instead of his having the opportunity of purchasing it in its raw state. When thrown, he cannot equally judge of its quality; nor has he the opportunity, as in the purchase of raw silk, of having it thrown, in respect of size and twist of thread, to suit the particular purposes required. When it is considered that silk is an article of luxury, and in respect of its higher branches of taste and fashion, every thing in point of success will be found to depend upon the beauty and perfection of the fabric, and the prosperity of the silk trade, as a whole, is intimately connected with the estimation in which its superior fabrics are held by the public at large. The manufacture, therefore, must have no obstacles thrown in his way of obtaining free access to the raw material, or the character of his manufacture will seriously suffer.

"How will the remission of the import-duty upon foreign thrown silks throw any obstacles in the way of his obtaining raw silk from Italy?—The Italians would, in that case, not forward to England their raw silk, but retain it, and send to us thrown.

"How do you show this?—Because, the import duty remitted, it would be more to their advantage to send thrown than raw silk to this country.

"How do you arrive at this conclusion?—I must be allowed here to particularize a little. Italy produces annually from seven to eight millions of pounds weight of raw silk. With the exception of a few coarse filatures sent to France, England has hitherto been her only customer, and of this annual crop receives about 1,300,000 lbs. weight. The rest is retained to be thrown in Italy for the continental markets, England receiving a small portion. Italy, threfore, being a throwing as well as a producing country, it is manifest that she can send it to us either in a raw or in a thrown state, and that she will do either as it may the better suit her purpose.

"It is further evident that the import duty of 3*s.* 6*d.* upon Italian thrown silks

silks is ultimately paid by the Italian throwster, and operates as an impost to secure to this country a larger supply relatively of raw silk, upon which only 1 *d.* import duty is charged to the Italian grower. The remission of the import duty upon foreign thrown silk must, therefore, upon every known principle of commerce, diminish the supply to this country of raw silk from Italy. The Italians, under such circumstances, will retain their raw silks to give increased employment to their throwing mills, and send us the same filatures, not as they do now, in their raw, but in their thrown or prepared state."

The apprehension expressed, that in case Britain take off the duty from thrown silks, the Italian governments would lay a heavy duty on the export of such silks, does not seem supported by probability. These Governments now levy a duty both on raw and on thrown silk, and thereby show that they have every desire to make what revenue they can, and if they do not levy more, it is not from any love for foreigners, but from a consideration of themselves and of their own subjects; and the same motive may be still expected to guide their actions, whatever may be the regulations of any of the Kingdoms at which their produce may arrive.

As to the duty levied on thrown silk in London ultimately coming out of the pocket of the Italian throwster, as alleged by Mr. Ballance, it does not appear how that can be shown. It could only be on the supposition that if there were no such duty in this country, he could sell his silk for so much more money. But he now gets the same from the merchants who buy from him, whether they intend to send his silk to Vienna or St. Petersburg, to Berlin or to London. The market price must be one and the same to all, whatever may be done afterwards with the article; and there appears no more reason for supposing that the Italian throwster pays the duty, than for saying that the French distiller pays the 22 *s.* 6 *d.* per gallon charged on the French brandies when imported into England.

The importance to the British manufacturer of being able to obtain a supply of Italian raw silk arises, according to Mr. Moore and Mr. Ballance, from two causes: first, he is enabled to select in the market such silk as will best suit the fabric in which he is engaged, which cannot so well be done after the silk is thrown, as that operation in a certain degree disguises its quality: second, when he sends this silk to be thrown, he can instruct the throwster, so as to have it done exactly in the manner best adapted to his particular purpose. Hence, by buying raw silk, he can obtain exactly what he wants, which would not be the case if he were compelled to select only from the Italian thrown silk, which might at the time be in the London market.

It is obvious that the two circumstances which have just been stated must operate in favour of the British throwster, as they are inducements to the manufacturer to buy raw silk, and get it thrown, instead of buying Italian thrown silk.

In confirmation of this view of the subject, it is stated in evidence by Mr. Alderman White, that when Italian organzine and British organzine, thrown from the same description of silk, are in the market together, the manufacturers give a decided preference to British organzine, and will pay as much as 1 *s.* a pound more for it. The preference is attributed to the excellence of British machinery.

Under these circumstances, there appears to be no reason why the British merchants cannot go into the Italian silk market, and give as good a price for the raw silks as the native throwsters can afford to do; and the silk growers and silk dealers of Italy are, like other men, exceedingly indifferent as to who their customers may be, provided only one thing be secure, that they will pay the best price.

The duty on thrown silk was fixed, not principally for the purpose of raising a fund from which to supply a bounty to exported silk, but with a view to the protection of the British throwster.

	s.	*d.*	
Before 1824 the duty on foreign thrown silk was -	14	8	per lb.
In 1825 it was - - - - - - - -	7	6	
In 1826 it was - - - - - - - -	5	–	
In 1829 it was reduced to - - - - -	3	6	

and so it nominally continues; but as a debenture for 3 *s.* 6 *d.* is given for every 3 *s.* 6 *d.* paid in duty, and as such debenture can be sold immediately on the average for 2 *s.* 3 *d.*, the duty is in reality only 1 *s.* 3 *d.*, being the excess of the duty beyond the market price of the debenture.

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It is utterly astonishing how the silk throwsters have, in every instance, foretold ruin to their trade on the occasion of every reduction; and yet, in every instance, their predictions have signally and happily proved untrue.

In the statement of the import of thrown silk already given, it will be seen, that it has diminished, and not increased. It would be painful to the feelings of the manufacturers who gave evidence in 1832 on the silk trade, to quote from the Parliamentary Report the prophecies which they made. But it cannot hurt the feelings of Mr. John Hall, of Coggeshall, as time has proved the truth of what he has said. Being asked, as in question 6470, "If 1*s.* 6*d.* were taken off the duty now payable of 3*s.* 6*d.*, would that prevent your throwing?" He said, "I think not; for I commenced under the protection of 14*s.*, made a large investment with my late partner, Thomas Sawer, above 10,000*l.*; afterwards we were reduced to 7*s.*, and we said we should be ruined, but we found ourselves exactly in the same situation. It was then reduced to 5*s.*, and from that to 3*s.* 6*d.*, and at 3*s.* 6*d.* duty I find myself in a better situation than I was before; if 1*s.* 6*d.* was taken off, my opinion is, the demand would be increased, and no injury arise to the throwster."

The real fact is now, that if the debenture of 3*s.* 6*d.* sell for 2*s.* 3*d.*, the protecting duty is only 1*s.* 3*d.* But then the Italian governments lay a higher duty on raw silks than on thrown silk exported, and our Government lays a duty of 1*d.* per pound on raw silk, so that the protection is thereby reduced below 1*s.* 3*d.*; and where the raw material can be obtained, the British throwster, as shown by Mr. Alderman White, protects himself best by his superior machinery, and the excellence of the goods which he produces. Mr. Hall, of Coggeshall, and Mr. Moy, of Colchester, support Alderman White in this view of the subject.

The duties now levied by the Italian governments, according to information given by Mr. Ambrose Moore, are as follows:—

"From Lombardy, and the other northern states of Italy, whence the greater part of the Italian raws are sent, the duty upon raw is 242 Austrian livres per 100 kilogrammes, equal to about 9*d.* per English pound, and upon thrown 120 Austrian livres per 100 kilogrammes, equal to about 4½*d.* per English pound.

"From Piedmont the exportation of raw is prohibited. The duty upon thrown is 1½ franc per kilogramme, equal to about 6½*d.* per English pound.

"From the Roman States the export duty is Paul ¼ per Roman pound, equal to about 2*d.* per English pound.

"From Naples the export is free."

Mr. Ballance and Mr. Batt, of the firm of White & Batt, give a similar statement.

The duties levied by the French government on exported silks, are 330 francs for 100 kilogrammes raw, and 220 francs for 100 kilogrammes thrown.

In respect of the bounty paid on the exportation of silk goods, it is only in idea connected with the duty paid on thrown silk. The bounty is not paid on the exportation of the same article on which the duty was paid; it is on goods made from different materials. It is precisely, therefore, in the same situation as if the bounty was paid directly from the taxes levied on the country in general.

Of the effect of this bounty, Mr. Alderman White gives the following evidence. Being asked if withdrawing the bounty would injure the exporting of silk, he replies, "I believe not; but at the worst, only for the first year; and from the present prospects of the British silk manufacture, I believe the abolition of the debenture system would be a measure of unmixed good; and I am confirmed in this opinion by a reference to the amount of our exports, and the drawback or bounty paid thereon. I will quote from the time when the present system came first into full action, and of British silk manufactures exported; the declared value in—

1830 was	£.521,010	Drawback paid	£.36,690
1831	578,874	„	46,659
1832	529,990	„	39,747
1833	737,404	„	60,644
1834	637,198	„	41,406
1835	973,786	„	61,349
1836	917,822	„	52,488
1837	494,569	„	25,096

And it may be further alleged, that more than one-third of the silk goods exported, and on which the drawback was paid, had but a very small quantity of silk in their composition. It is, however, enough to say, that this wretched remnant of the old system, with all its boasted advantages, as an encouragement

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of an export trade, and of the employment of our hand-loom weavers, is utterly contemptible, and ought to be at once abrogated, as after all the bounty obtainable by the debenture, amounting to about seven per cent., half of which is paid to the importer, is in reality less than the raw material of the manufacture, is itself artificially enhanced by the original impost on the foreign thrown silk. It is mere surplusage to reiterate how deeply injurious I deem the levying so heavy a duty on foreign thrown silk, and which re-acts with such mischievous effect on the raw material employed in a most valuable, increasing, and likely to be prosperous manufacture. And, besides, it must not be forgotten, that the augmentation of the prices of all kinds of raw silks, by the stupid duty on throwns, prevents England becoming, what it ought to be, the emporium for raw silk, which its capital would attract, and from whence also the continent would be mainly supplied with the Bengal and China silks, both raw and thrown. This is a trade which is each day becoming more and more important, and must increase; but by the intervention of the duty, it labours under a great disadvantage, as, for instance, the Italian organzine, which can be bought in Lyons at 25*s.*, will cost our manufacturer 27*s.*; and hence, whilst it may be the interest of our own manufacturer to use in preference a Bengal organzine at 21*s.* 6*d.*, or a China organzine at 23*s.*, it will not be to the advantage of the manufacturer of Lyons to use other than the Italian organzine, he obtaining it 2*s.* per lb. lower than the British manufacturer. Hence, to compete with Italian organzine in the Lyons market, we must have in this both Bengal and China throwns disproportionately low, and of necessity raws also, before we can safely venture to export to the French market.

"With no more duty here than paid in France, when it was the interest of the English manufacturer to consume in preference Bengal and China silks, it would be almost equally so with the French manufacturer, save the difference in transit, &c. which, on a valuable article like silk, is but trifling; and thus, with our home-thrown China and Bengal silks, we should be able, in the French, Russian and German markets to successfully compete with the Italian silks. As it is, the present impost, which is alone defended and maintained to protect our home throwster, inflicts on him the severest injury; and were the duty on thrown silk abolished, there would be a vast increase in the export of English thrown silk, and the poorest and sickliest branch of the silk trade would become the richest and most healthy, as the progress of our continental neighbours in the silk manufacture too plainly shows, that, as regards them, we can only hope to export the product of our wheels, not the product of our looms. A social phasis, or a commercial revolution, which is now surely, but silently progressing, thanks to the wisdom of our present legislators. I may here observe, that we exported last year of raw and thrown silk together, only about 370,000 lbs., or about one-eleventh of our whole import, and in 1804, 127,332 lbs., which was about the same proportion on the then import, being 1,481,563 lbs."

The exporting manufacturers, as might be expected, express opinions very strongly in favour of the bounty being continued. Mr. Moore says—

"It has increased the exportation of manufactured silks, as may be seen by the following statement of the exports of silk goods before and since the system was adopted. It came into operation in 1829, and its effects may be clearly seen—

1825	£. 296,662	declared value.
1826	168,283	„
1827	236,092	„
1828	255,870	„
1829	267,930	„
In the latter part of this year the debenture system came into operation.		
1830	£. 521,112	declared value.
1831	578,260	„
1832	529,691	„
1833	737,404	„
1834	637,013	„
1835	973,479	„
1836	916,777	„
1837	503,653	„
1838 about	750,000	„

I consider this part of the inquiry of great importance, as, by raising up an export trade, and introducing English silk goods to the knowledge of other

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countries, and giving foreigners a taste for them, there can be no doubt that it will eventually become one of great magnitude; but without the assistance of the debenture, at present its progress will be much impeded. A very good effect is also produced on the market by the relief it gives from gluts of goods, and the system works peculiarly well in this point of view, as it is precisely at such dull periods when a stimulus to export is most wanted, that the debenture sells at the lowest price. It at the same time, and for the same reason, gives the English throwster the most protection at the time when he needs it most.

"Have you any further statement to make?—The British throwster labours under many disadvantages, as compared with those of Italy. It is true that his machinery is as good, or better, and his skill is as great, but wages are much higher, and the disadvantage is not made up by any superior degree of application or energy; for the people employed are chiefly women and children, and not capable of vigorous energy like men. The climate in Italy is more favourable, so that the work-people can better handle the fine silk. The silk itself works more easily in the Italian climate than in England. Buildings of a less expensive nature than in England will suffice. The Italian throwster being on the spot, can select the best raw silk, and has it free from all the accidents to which it is liable in a journey to England, which is a great advantage.

With the opinions of Mr. Moore, Mr. Ballance coincides—

"The English throwster is placed under great disadvantages in the throwing of Italian raw silk, as compared with the Italian throwster. His plant and power are much more expensive; wages, although reduced full one-half, are still much higher; besides, he is not in a situation to select the best working filatures, but must be content to throw what the Italians choose to export; and they are known to retain their freest working silks, as more profitable for their own mills. To these must be added the increased duty levied by their government upon the export of raw silk.

"These circumstances of the English throwster entitle him, upon every principle of justice, to a protecting duty; and the loss of property in that branch of the silk trade consequent upon the reduction of the import duty in 1829 from 5*s.* to 3*s.* 6*d.* The profitless employment of capital, and its depressed condition ever since, incontestably prove that a further reduction of the import duty would lead to the discontinuance of the throwing of Italian raw silk."

I have inserted these long extracts from the evidence of the exporting manufacturers and mill-owners, in consequence of the anxiety which they expressed that their case should be fully represented.

It has been asserted that formerly there were great frauds committed on the revenue, by making up goods with only very little silk, with a view to obtain the bounty on exportation; and no doubt, when the debentures were sold so low as 1*d.* or little more, there was a very great temptation. But from the statement of Mr. Brocklehurst, and the evidence of Mr. Moore and Mr. Ballance, and still more so from the evidence of Mr. Henry Tucker, of the firm of John Baker & Co., to whom the Custom-house officers are accustomed to refer in case of doubt, and who therefore has had the best means of knowing, there is reason to believe that no fraud of this sort is now practised.

It has by political economists been held, that a trade which could not be made to support itself, except by a bounty, was not worth supporting at all. The silk goods exported are the coarsest fabrics. If only a tenth of the mischief stated by Alderman White be produced by the duty on thrown silk, it is highly important that such duty should be abolished; and this I submit to the consideration of the Central Board.

At the same time, however, so long as the Italian governments exact a higher duty on the export of raw silk than on the export of thrown silk, and the British Government exacts 1*d.* for every pound of such silk admitted into the United Kingdom, it will be necessary to exact a duty on every pound of thrown silk imported, as a counterpoise, in order that the British throwster may work on equal terms with the foreigner.

The application of the money so raised is a separate consideration, whether it shall be expended in bounties, as at present, or applied to the usual purposes of revenue. The latter would seem the better course of the two; but altogether, if the duty be reduced, the application of the money so raised is a matter of much less importance.

Duty on Raw Silk.

The duty on raw silk is only one penny in the pound weight. Although objectionable in principle, the amount is too small to be felt as a burthen; and as it ensures an account being kept at the Custom-house of the silk taken out for consumption, the knowledge thus obtained may be considered as a compensation.

On the Collection of the Duties on Foreign Silk Goods.

When it was resolved to depart from the policy which had totally prohibited the admission into the Kingdom of foreign manufactured silk goods, it was still considered desirable to impose a duty, in order to give the advantage to the British manufacturer. Very little reflection will show, that if goods are at all admitted into any country, it will be impossible to collect effectually any duties which much exceed the cost at which they may be got introduced by contraband. Upon this principle, Government decided that the duty levied upon figured goods should be 30 per cent., and on plain goods should be 25 per cent. The difference between the two kinds arises from this, that the figured goods depend on fashion, and when a sale can be made, it would be hazardous for the importer to risk delay. They are also liable to be spoiled by the mode in which the goods are conveyed by the smugglers, and therefore it will be preferable for the importer to pay an additional 5 per cent., rather than incur these inconveniences. But it was considered that, on plain goods, 25 per cent. was the utmost which could successfully be collected. The Custom-house officer is at liberty to levy the duty of 30 or 25 per cent. on the value declared by the importer, if he think fit. He also may take the goods himself at the declared value, paying to the importer a further sum of 10 per cent. as his profit. This option, however, a Custom-house officer will seldom or ever venture on in fancy articles, as it is difficult for him to be certain as to the value; and, besides this, fashion is so capricious, that, before a Custom-house sale can be effected, other fabrics may have come into favour, and these articles may be no longer saleable. Such a power, therefore, is inoperative, and, as a check against the fraud of the importer, an option was given to the officer to have the goods weighed, and to charge a duty by the pound weight, one duty for figured silk goods, and another and lower duty on the plain goods. To facilitate the collection of the duty, it was enacted that silk goods should be imported only at the ports of London, Dover and Dublin.

Practically it may be said that the import is confined to the port of London. No silk goods have of late been brought to Dover; and the official value of the silk manufactures of Europe imported into Dublin, was in 1835 only 183*l.* 11*s.* 10*d.*, in 1836, 488*l.* 8*s.* 6*d.*, and in 1837, 214*l.* 4*s.* 9*d.*

Several manufacturers gave evidence before the Committee of Parliament on the silk trade in 1832, that the duties were not correctly levied, and that foreign goods got through the Custom-house at a rate below that ordered by the Legislature. Some of these manufacturers have stated their readiness to repeat their evidence, if it could be of any service. It is sufficient to refer to the printed Report of the Parliamentary Committee, and to the evidence annexed.

Mr. Frederick Martin, a dealer in gold and silver lace and ribands in London, who is entrusted by many manufacturers of Coventry to negotiate in their behalf with Government, has given evidence to show in what manner goods are introduced at a duty below what the Act requires:—

"The foreign silks are allowed to be landed at any quay in the port of London. Notice is given to the Custom-house, and an officer is sent. It is all a matter of chance who may be the officer; it is whoever may happen to be at leisure at the time. The officer goes to see the silk goods. Of their nature and value he is but very little acquainted. There is the greatest possible difference between one officer and another. Large importers have been heard to say, that it would make 100*l.* difference in the duty of one large packing, whether one officer came or another. As the easiest way for himself, and to avoid the risk of having his judgment called in question, the officer has the silks weighed, and he charges by the pound weight. But the silks which ought to be charged at a high duty per pound, he will charge at a low duty, from not understanding their fabric and value."

The following extracts from the evidence of this witness will further explain his views on this subject:—

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"Have the manufacturers any means of furnishing information, in detail, as to the amount of silk goods introduced at too low a rate, and the loss to the revenue in this way?—They have no means of giving the exact amount, or the particulars. Since 1831, the duties on foreign silks imported are all blended into one account at the Custom-house, so that it is impossible to say what has been received on one kind of goods, and what on another; but all the trade, by observing the abundance of French goods in the market, and then comparing with the amount of the duty received, feel certain that fraud, to an enormous amount, has been committed, and great loss to the revenue sustained, and injury to the British manufacturer and his workmen. It is also known that a duty much too low must have been charged from the prices at which French goods are offered for sale. The cost of the goods is well known to the manufacturers here, and they know that it would be impossible to sell the goods at the prices demanded, if the full duty had been paid.

"Have you no other evidence of a more direct and positive nature?—The importers of French goods generally know well enough the amount of duty which they have paid on their own goods, and what they would have had to pay if the Act of Parliament duties had been correctly and skilfully levied. It is quite notorious in the trade that such things are of constant and daily occurrence.

"There would then, probably, be no difficulty in obtaining evidence from the dealers in silk on this subject?—In common conversation, either with them or their managing clerks, cases are constantly spoken of without reserve; but there will be some difficulty as to their giving public evidence. It is against their interest to do so. They would rather have the goods imported without any duty at all, if they could; and, besides, they dread being marked men at the Custom-house; and there is an apprehension on their minds, that if they gave evidence of too low duties being charged, such would never be the case again in respect of their goods, at all events. If there were a correct system by which all were made to pay alike, they would be well pleased; but they would seriously suffer if they paid the full duty, and other men could undersell them by getting their goods introduced at a lower rate. I have received from many dealers in silk, statements of the rate at which they had imported silks and ribands. I have here lists of them, with samples of the silks and ribands; and the duties charged are greatly below 30 per cent., as intended by the Legislature."

The remedy for this evil proposed by this witness is very simple, and would probably be effectual; it is thus stated:—

"What is the chief measure which you think would be expedient to collect the duty in an accurate manner?—I think that all the French silk goods imported should be brought to the Custom-house in the lock-up Custom-house boats, to be examined, instead of being allowed to be landed at any of the quays on the banks of the river; and I think also that there ought to be an inspector of silk goods selected from amongst persons who had been brought up in the silk trade, and who should therefore have sufficient knowledge to discriminate the qualities and descriptions of goods.

"How would you recommend that such inspector should be chosen?—I would recommend that the inspector appointed should be on the recommendation and testimonials from the manufacturers. For their own sake, they would recommend only a skilful, well-qualified person, and then the manufacturers would watch his conduct, and report him if they found he did not faithfully execute his duty.

What additional security would there be that an inspector so appointed would faithfully do his duty, and protect the revenue and the British manufacturer?—He would act only in concert with an officer, which would be something. Then also, having been recommended by the manufacturers, he would have a strong motive to do his duty to them; and if he were not to do so, the truth would soon be known to the trade, and complaints would be made against him.

"What security would there be that the inspector would not overdo his office, and be desirous of charging too much duty?—There is exceedingly little danger on this side. An importer would not submit to pay the high duties demanded, and would appeal to the Board against the inspector; and an inquiry being instituted, and evidence examined, it would easily be seen if the inspector understood his duty, and was able accurately to classify the goods under the several heads designated by the Act of Parliament."

Mr. Martin produced the originals, and handed in copies of letters from manufacturers and dealers, expressing coincidence of opinion as to the existing evil,

evil, and the remedy to be applied. These letters were from Messrs. R. S. Cox & Co., Thomas Bottrill, and Hood, Ward & Hood, all of London; also from Messrs. Thomas Brown, Sharp & Odell, R. Purbery, Sturdy & Turner, H. & C. Bankes, Thomas Cope, and W. Johnson, all of Coventry.

Such is the evidence offered regarding the collection of the duties on foreign silk goods; and I recommend the matter to the consideration of the Central Board. It is perfectly clear that the manufacturers and weavers are entitled to demand that the law shall be faithfully administered; and that what King, Lords and Commons have given to them, no inferior authority shall presume to take away.

Distress from the Irregularity and Uncertainty of the Employment, and the Remedies.

The first and great cause of the distress of the weavers, is the irreguiarity of their employment; and the only remedy which can afford permanent relief, must have its object in the diminution of that irregularity, if it cannot altogether be prevented.

There is, perhaps, no occupation in society so much subject to irregularity and uncertainty of employment, as that of the silk weaver. In common with the merchant, he is affected by the fluctuations of commerce, and he is also subject to that which influences his fate still more, and which baffles all possible calculation, the caprice of fashion. Hence for a period of time, which may be longer or shorter, there is an abundance of employment for all hands that can possibly be induced to enter into the trade, and at such times multitudes are enlisted into it, and then, after a time, the employment may cease to a greater or less degree, and to what extent no man can ever predict, and how long it may endure is equally uncertain. There may be an embarrassment in the commerce of the country, or there may be a change of fashion, and either of those causes will produce a powerful effect, and if both causes come into operation together, the whole body of the weavers is reduced to incalculable misery.

At a period of great demand for silk goods, the weavers previously employed, have not now to wait, after bringing home the last piece, for a week or fornight before getting another cane. There is no artificial delay effected by keeping them, during the progress of weaving a cane, a week or more at a time waiting for shute. Every facility is now afforded; and although no addition be made to the rate of payment, much more wages are earned. The other weavers who have been nearly, or altogether, unemployed, have now work given to them. The weavers' wives now also get work, and their boys and girls who never were in the loom before, are now put to the trade, and are allowed the same rate per yard as grown persons. Fresh hands are also introduced. From the metropolis the demand for labour goes into the country. All the old weavers are employed with their wives and families; agricultural labourers are engaged on every side, and every one is urged to do all he can. Blemishes, for which at other times a deduction from the wages would have been claimed, are now overlooked. Carts are sent round to the villages and hamlets, with the work, for the weavers, that time may not be lost in going to the warehouse to carry home, or take out work.

The facility with which the plainest kind of weaving may be done, is abundantly shown by the evidence given in London and in the country towns. One of the Norwich witnesses expresses it that the weavers may be "struck into existence in a month." Men from almost any other employment may be put to do the plainest and easiest fabrics, and men who have been accustomed to do the easiest fabrics, may be advanced to those which are more difficult.

The whole number is, therefore, capable of an immediate and indefinite extension.

But let us see the contrast when business falls off, and at no time is there so likely to be so complete a stagnation of employment and commercial embarrassment as immediately after an extremely exciting and supposed prosperity, as in the beginning of 1825 and in 1836. As to the caprices of fashion, they baffle all calculation.

The immediate effect is, that all the less skilful workmen, the dissolute and disorderly, are denied work. The third and fourth looms, those worked by the sons and daughters of the weavers, are all thrown out of use. The weaver is fortunate who can get work for himself, and reckons himself still more fortunate if he can get a second loom employed also, perhaps by his wife.

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But the manufacturers, at such a period, do systematically and with design divide what work they still have to do amongst as many weavers as they possibly can, in order to retain as large a number of hands as they can about them, and thereby be able, when trade revives, to supply the demand. They may also be actuated by an idea that it is benevolent so to do. Hence the weaver is kept waiting between one cane and another, not only, as sometimes is the case, because the manufacturer is waiting for fresh orders from the mercers, but because he keeps engaged far more people than he can fully employ, and he makes the best excuses that he can to put off weavers one by one. Many of these men, ignorant of the motives, attribute to tyranny and caprice what is really the result of calculating design.

At such times the country towns and villages, to which work is liberally sent when there is a demand for goods, suffer still more. A staff or skeleton only is kept in pay, and that chiefly with a view to operations when a demand returns.

It is at such a period that the poorer or more grinding manufacturers take advantage of the misery of the workmen, and effect a reduction of wages. Mr. Charles Cole gives evidence, that formerly the scales at a manufacturer's were open, so that 20 or 30 might hear all that passed; but now there are boxes built round the scales, and only one weaver is introduced at a time, and no one can hear what passes, in order that the masters may treat with the men individually, and take advantage of their fears, and reduce their wages one by one.

The manufacturer in the present day is not able to lay up a stock of goods, as he could during the prohibition of foreign silk. He knew then that he had no other rivals than persons under the same circumstances with himself, and he ventured to mitigate the severity of distress of his weavers' fate, by making a stock of goods which he had confidence of being able to sell at a future time. The manufacturers dare not do so now.

The delusive hopes produced by the irregularity and uncertainty tend to retain many in the employment. In the worst of times there are not only some, but even many, who are fully employed. Many thousand hope that they may get into a similar state. The weavers who are kept systematically only partially employed, are always hoping to be constantly employed, and few of them see that this could not be done with any large number, except by depriving another large number of employment altogether. The weavers, when out of work, go from one master to another, seeking work, receiving kind promises as to the future, with regrets that they cannot be fully employed at once; and thus go on, always flattering themselves, and little better off, until at last a revival of trade brings them relief.

There is, therefore, a considerable portion of lottery, fortune and chance in the weaver's occupation. This produces a fond delusion on the mind, and multitudes cling to a trade which they would not abandon, even for one more productive than their own, which had not this attraction.

Too great attachment to the occupation is the bane of the trade. The cause just last mentioned would of itself retain many, even against their better judgment; but there are other attractions. There is a sort of independence about the work. A weaver is not tied to hours like the carpenter, bricklayer and most artisans. He may begin his work when he pleases. He is not confined within the walls, like men in a spinning factory. He may go out when he thinks fit. He may work to 10 and 11 o'clock, or later, to make up for lost time. The weaver also enjoys the society of his family. He feels strongly the domestic attachments, even beyond what cool reason would approve. Hence he will not find any other employment for his children, and easily believes that he cannot.

Even the occasional or long want of employment has a strange benumbing influence, which indisposes the weaver so seek for other work. Necessity at such times teaches to half exist on almost nothing, and this diminishes mental and bodily energy; and the habit of indolence, from doing nothing from day to day, becomes a ruling principle. There is a strong instance of this at Braintree. When the crape weavers of that place, after being for months idle, had, on a demand springing up, work given to them in 1837, the manufacturer found, after some weeks, that exceedingly little was done, and he ascertained that they were not engaged at any thing else, but too indolent to work as formerly. He was therefore obliged to exact from every one a condition, that a certain quantity should be done every week, and that, too, was much less than they could do, under a penalty of a fine, and risk of being totally discharged.

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From all these causes it is, that many are drawn into the trade, and afterwards bring up their children to it, and cling to the trade under every disadvantage. There is at the best of times a full supply of hands, equal to the work, and at other times a great superabundance. At the best of times the weaver can never be very highly paid, and at other times, even if the same price be paid for the work done, the work to be done is so little in comparison of the number willing and anxious to do it, that the wages distributed amongst so many, make but a very poor and wretched income, and from which a comfortable existence cannot be supported.

Emigration, or any other measures which might remove a considerable portion of the present unemployed weavers, could not effect any permanent change in the condition of the trade generally. The effect on the portion removed is not now the subject of consideration; but even were the number removed so many, that the work now given out was sufficient to employ all who remained, exertions would be made by parents to get work for their children, which would throw some out of employment; and when a period of great demand ensued, and many more weavers were required, they would soon be obtained; and when the demand slackened, there would then be the unemployed and partially employed, as now, and the same scenes of distress would be again renewed.

We may compare emigration to pumping water from a pond in a marsh. It lowers it for a time, but water trickles in from every side, and fills the pond again up.

These observations are not made with a view to impugn measures of emigration, or voluntary removal of weavers from one part of the Kingdom to another. To the individuals concerned, emigration or removal, if judiciously conducted, may be beneficial, and a diminution of the number of applicants for work will, of course, for a time, benefit those who remain behind; but such things can afford no permanent remedy, nor change the far extending system of causes which tend to keep the number of silk-weavers, at most times, far above the demand.

Even an aggregate increase of the silk trade can afford only temporary relief. Many persons, looking at the official returns of the silks imported, and also taken out for consumption, are lost in wonder that there should be a complaint of the want of employment; but this is easily accounted for, as the average number of weavers is now far greater than before. As the demand for goods goes on increasing, the number of operatives goes on increasing, and fully in proportion. Every greater and extraordinary demand brings a greater number into the trade, and hence a greater number are to suffer from want of employment, when the extraordinary demand ceases. With a small silk trade, there would be alternations of prosperity and distress; and with a great silk trade, there are the same alternations, but on a larger scale.

Hence also we may see that if every ounce of foreign manufactured silk goods were to be excluded from the Kingdom, and if the British public, in lieu of such goods, were to purchase our own manufactures, it would not put an end to the alternations of prosperity and distress. There would be employment for an increased number of hands no doubt, and so far it would be a relief for a time, but it would not put an end to those fluctuations which bring distress, and affect a greater number of individuals in proportion to the magnitude of the trade.

But even an alleviation of the evil, and a relief, if only temporary, are desirable, and no means to effect these objects ought to be neglected.

The most obvious remedy in this state of things, is to make known to the weavers what is their real condition; to relieve them from the delusion of supposing that the period of want of employment is a deviation from the course of nature, and that under every circumstance a constant and regular employment is to be expected. The men who in a time of brisk trade are induced to take to weaving, must be made to know, that to a large portion of them it can be only a temporary employment; that the period of slackness will come, if not as regularly, yet quite as certainly, as the ebb of the tide; and that then a certain portion of weavers will have nothing to do, and that those who are still engaged, will be tantalized waiting for work, and will have only a very partial employment.

If men, therefore, will, in defiance of all hazards, enter into the trade, let them do it with their eyes open, perfectly aware of what they are doing, and let them make up their minds to abide the event.

Assuming that by a diffusion of a sound knowledge of this subject, fewer persons will rush to weaving, the question will arise whether it will not prevent the

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manufacturer from availing himself of the full demand that he otherwise might do, and whether the silk merchants, the throwster, and all parties more or less engaged, will not be sufferers.

There is a decisive answer to such observations, that no man of honest conscience can ever for a moment consent to keep one part of the community in ignorance, in order that another part of the community may make a profit of their miscalculations and future misery. Let all parties know their real situation, and then the interest of all will be best adjusted.

But if, from a knowledge of the nature of the employment, there should be produced a diminution of the number of the persons willing to become weavers, it does not follow that the trade of the country will suffer to the extent which might be supposed.

When the caprice of fashion cannot so readily be satisfied, it may in some degree be curbed. If a full supply of goods cannot be given immediately on the demand, the price will rise, and the manufacturer will derive a larger profit. If by the rise of price, a certain number who at lower prices would be consumers, refrain from their purchases, they must consume other goods instead, which to the nation at large may be equally beneficial. Further, if a glut be prevented of silk goods, the fashion may in some degree be prolonged; and in time all ranks will obtain the gratification to their taste. Fashion will move more slowly, but it will descend through all ranks of silk consumers. The demand therefore will be spread over a larger period of time, and the manufacturers and the weavers will be equally benefited.

To the persons employed by the silk throwsters there will be a corresponding advantage. Instead of an excess of employment when they are induced to work night and day, and, for a small trifle of advanced wages, ruin their constitutions, their employment will be more equally diffused over a longer space of time, and will not present the same extremes of excess and slackness as now.

It will be no small matter also that the manufacturer will be less liable, by a sudden caprice of fashion, to be left with a ruinous amount of goods in his hands, the loss on which may sweep away at once the hard-earned savings of many previous years.

Should the consequences be, that from a demand beyond what the British looms can produce, an increase should take place in the amount of foreign silk goods imported, it will be a result which will not appear at all alarming to the advocates of free trade. It is a settled principle, that there can be no buying without selling, and there must be a corresponding export of British goods in repayment, so that the national industry is not injured, but the encouragement to it is more widely extended.

If, therefore, the Central Board, on a full consideration of the subject, shall arrive at the same views, it is suggested to them, that the most efficient means should be adopted to make known to the weavers, and to society at large, what is the real nature of the employment afforded in the trade. Upon many it is to be feared that all warning will have no effect; but it is to be hoped that there are others who will profit by it, and if only a partial good be the result, it will be a matter of high satisfaction.

To the crape weavers in particular it is most important that they should see their real situation.

The weavers of crape, or, as they call it, of *hard silk*, are under circumstances very different from the other silk weavers, and very little will be required to explain their case.

By far the greater part of the crapes are now made by the power-loom, and it would be easy for the manufacturers to increase their power-loom establishments, and make the whole of the crapes thereby; but it is not their interest so to do. Like other branches of the silk manufacture, the crape branch has its high and its low tide. The manufacturers study so to arrange the extent of their power-loom factories, that they shall be able to produce all the goods which they expect shall be in demand at low tide; and they even venture to go a little farther, and to accumulate at certain times a stock of goods to be ready for the market as soon as there may be a brisk sale. But they do not venture to go farther in extending their factories; for if they were to do so, then during slack demand they would be obliged to have a part of their looms idle, and thus they would lose the interest of their capital fixed in buildings, and in machinery, of their looms, and in providing the power, whether by water or steam. To be able,

able, however, to take advantage of an extraordinary demand for goods, they employ a certain number of hand-loom weavers; and when trade falls off, they gradually diminish the number, until perhaps they scarcely have any at all. Thus the factories are for what is expected to be the steady and permanent demand, and the hand-loom weavers are a body to meet the fluctuations of the market, and to be adjusted as circumstances may arise.

The crape weavers are paid lower wages than other silk weavers, as may be seen by the accounts of Braintree and Norwich; nevertheless, at ordinary times they are not employed, as it is more beneficial for the manufacturer to get his work done by power. It is only when there is a large profit by increased price and a speedy return of capital that the manufacturer is indnced to employ them.

The inquiry to be made is, what, under those circumstances, can be done for the crape weavers, and the answer must be, that the only thing which at present can be done is, to explain to them what is the real state of their occupation, and advise them to flee from that occupation as soon as they can.

The power of the Czar of Russia could not raise the wages of men so situate. He might, indeed, order a scale of prices to be paid to them for the work which they did, but in such case the manufacturer would soon cease to give out work, as it would be against his interest to do it.

The Czar of Russia, either by fixing on a high scale of wages, or by a direct command, might put an end to the occupation altogether; and such would be a most merciful exercise of his unlimited power; but the authority of the government of a free country cannot thus control the subjects, even for their own good; and all that remains, therefore, is to enlighten the crape hand-loom weavers as to their real situation, warn them to flee from the trade, and to beware of leading their children into it, as they would beware of the commission of the most atrocious of crimes.

Of the great body of the working people, and of the weavers as much as of others, it would be in opposition to past experience as yet to anticipate much prudence, whatever education may do for them in future. We may be quite sure, therefore, that unless some measure be adopted to protect the weavers against the rush into the trade when a demand springs up, such rush will take place.

Such protection in the form of an apprenticeship, some of the weavers, in particular those of Braintree, have put forward as one remedy of their distress; and to be effectual, such system must not only require a certain period of instruction, but must limit the number of apprentices to be taught.

This subject has been most ably and fully treated by Mr. John Hawkins Elliott, a gentleman who has devoted much of his attention to the condition of the working classes, and I give his evidence at length:—

"There is a tendency, according to the law of population, for mankind to increase up to the utmost amount that can be supported according to their standard of the necessaries of life, and, amongst the greater part, that standard is an exceedingly low standard. This truth is illustrated by the condition of the greater part of the operatives of Great Britain, whose manipulations do not require much skill. They usually obtain the minimum of wages, by reason of the pressure of the labourers in the labour market. This fact is veiled from even educated persons; for there are so many modifying circumstances that produce the complicated result, that is, before the inquirer whose economical examinations are directed to any particular branch of industry, that those modifying circumstances are not unfrequently taken as the main causes of distress, instead of being only auxiliary causes. None suffer more specifically from this cause than the agricultural labourers. The land-loom weavers suffer from it: their craft is learned in a few weeks, and, therefore, no sooner is there full employment for their looms, than the agricultural labourers (as in Norfolk) press their families into the labour market, and underwork them. The inferior operatives are harassed by the competition of labourers from Ireland, who are willing to work for less than the English labourers, wages being in that island, according to Mr. Inglis, 4*d.* per day.* Among the circumstances which obscure the

* According to the Railway Commissioners, wages in Ireland are—

In the north	1*s.* a day.
In the middle and south	8*d.* a day.
In the west	6*d.* a day.

They state, however, that "in many places the people are out of work three or four months in the year,"

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the evidence of this great truth, may be mentioned the improvidence of a large portion of the working people, by reason of which those who receive comparatively high wages, fall into destitution as extreme as those who get the lowest wages. It is notorious, that the highest paid workmen are usually the most improvident.

"In several departments of industry wages have experienced little or no diminution for many years. In these departments, some of the operatives use great skill; but many require only a skill that may be learned in a short time, and need little more training than the agricultural labourer or the weaver. The agricultural labourer, little skilled as he may be considered, requires some time and experience to become a good workman; in truth, more time is needed to make a tolerably good ploughman than to make a tolerably good weaver. The wages of both are at the lowest, or nearly so. Whence arises this inequality of wages? While some mechanics of small skill can earn 18*s.* or 20*s.* per week, how is it that others, such as husbandmen and weavers, can earn but 8*s.* or 10*s.*? Because artificial regulations are preserved with determined resolution by the highly-paid classes of these workmen, and enforced by sanctions chiefly applied among themselves, many of which are of a normal character. By these regulations men are prevented from working at less than a fixed rate of wages; and also by certain difficulties that are opposed against an indiscriminate admission of learners into their trades, the number of workmen is effectually limited. 'All over Europe,' says Adam Smith, 'these regulations exist in some degree;' and thus, by laws regulating apprenticeship, different trades and professions have practically fenced out a considerable swarm of competitors, and have preserved a higher level than that of the working mass around them. When a sum of money must be paid, varying from 5*l.* to 500*l.*, before a youth can matriculate in any trade university, a monopoly is bestowed to those who can command the 5*l.* or 500*l.* against those who have it not and when five or seven years must elapse before the apprentice be allowed to work as a journeyman, that is to say, before he be allowed to take his skilled (and then privileged) labour wherever he pleases, and sell it to the highest bidder, he becomes protected against a hungry competition, that enables him to command higher wages. These protected classes of workmen have, in truth, by this means not only preserved a high rate of wages, the money amount of which has remained the same for many years, but, in consequence of the greater cheapness of commodities, as well of comfort as of necessity, their wages measured by the food, clothes, &c., that they can buy, are much higher. The number of these privileged labourers is small compared with the whole mass; and were it not that the superior pecuniary privilege of these, the skilled labour-monopoly class become more or less abused, and their good wages wasted in excessive animal indulgence, they would soon become capitalists.

"Wages are sustained by theseprotections. It is, therefore, desirable to increase them, and to exclude more and more from the industrial occupations those who have not matriculated. By this means, a larger and larger parcel of the labourers will be received up into the protected fortresses, whose physical and moral condition may become improved; for it is certain that no advance in these important respects can take place without wages be sustained. The highly-paid labourers *may* be wretched and improvident; the lowest paid labourers *must* be so. The trade of the hand-loom weaver is learned in a few weeks; and the unemployed and the worst paid in other trades tend to flow in upon it, as do the Irish upon Lancashire and the husbandmen upon Norwich. Establish an apprentice system, and you give protection to the weavers; you impose conditions of admission into the craft and mystery by which fewer can rush into it; you diminish competition, and you sustain wages. This appears the only practical means by which the condition can be permanently improved.

"The expansion of the labour market, as the experience of the past proves, is instantly followed by a creation of labourers, who, in the end, make the pressure as tight as it was before the relief took place.

"The experience of the past also proves that the causes of the expansion itself have

year," p. 6. They also state of the peasantry generally, and of the west and south-west more particularly—"No system of constant or remunerative industry is established amongst them. The cultivation of their patches of land, and the labour of providing fuel, are their sole employment, which, occupying but a comparatively small portion of their time, leaves them exposed to all the temptations of an idle, reckless and needy existence," p. 79.

have not acted steadily and permanently, and that a contraction has always succeeded, whose gripe has been of aggravated severity, contracting, as it does, upon a denser mass of labourers. Thus labourers are an ever-increasing number, ever pressing upon the labour market, which market may be regarded as surrounded by an expansive limit, gradually, and perhaps permanently, but still indefinitely, increasing; but the expansion is not necessarily in the ratio of the pressure from within; nor does the expansion follow any definite ratio, but it is always disturbed by contractions, which inflict acute suffering upon the labourers. It is clear that the suffering will be more or less acute as the labourers are more or less redundant. If their numbers can be diminished in any particular section of industry, that section will be relieved from some of its suffering; and it commonly happens that the contraction and dilatation does not usually extend over the whole labour area at the same time, but it is confined to one or more sections only. Those, then, who, by apprentice regulations, can check their numbers, will, of course, suffer the least; and if these regulations be applied to that particular section, the hand-loom weavers, a reduction must take place in their numbers. When business is brisk, they will command a higher rate of wages, they will work more hours, and then, of their excessive production, they will be enabled to save a portion for bad times; and if, having had the opportunity, they do not save, their calamities, much as we may deplore them, are their own affair, and not that of society; and in such cases of self-inflicted misery, whoever interferes to grant an inefficient relief (and all relief will be inefficient) draws away the minds of the sufferers from the true causes of their sufferings, excites hopes which will only be followed by bitter disappointment, and, in truth, counteracts the designs of Providence, and encourages idleness and improvidence.

"There is no doubt that the causes of the sufferings of the hand-loom weavers are to be found within themselves. The cause common to themselves, with the whole labouring body, protected by artificial regulations, and unprotected, is their improvidence. Nothing will reach this but a superior system of education, so universally applied, that it shall leave no man to the accident of being ignorant. By this, and by the judicious administration of charitable relief, so administered, that it shall not act, as it usually does, to encourage vice and profligacy, the weavers, as well as other classes, may become provident, and in the end the masters of their own happiness. But the cause which is peculiar to that large section of labourers, which includes the weavers, is excess of numbers, which is to be relieved by the same system of apprenticeship and matriculation, which, through ages past, has sustained the mechanics so highly above the level of their fellow-labourers. I recommend, therefore, as affording a direct relief to the hand-loom weavers, that a system of apprenticeship should be introduced according to regulations which may be hereafter expounded. One most supremely valuable effect will be to protect the English weaver against Irish competition. So long as the English weaver is compelled to work against a labourer whose standard is potatoes, and a suit of clothes of the most wretched description, so long will the condition be irremediable.

"It may be objected that, if protections are thus afforded to the hand-loom weavers against the competition of other labourers, that those labourers will be unfairly dealt by: I contend that they will not suffer. The ever swelling tide of population, if not checked, tends, as has been shown, to flow over every little elevated spot of industry, and reduce it to one common level, to flow on until it has reduced every little raised-up community of workers to one republic of miserable labourers, just at starvation point. Every trades' union and every apprentice regulation may be compared to a little rock of gault, such as rises every where in the fens of Ely, on which a privileged few may rest above the unwholesome broad level swamp which expands around. Clear away any little gaulty rocklet, cast it down into the peat bog, and the bog will remain at its old level. What is required, is to heave up more of these healthy secure eminences, or, to drop the illustration, to raise the condition of a greater number of labourers, and, not by the abolition of their apparently arbitrary and unjust protections, reduce the whole body of labourers to a common level. While a multitude of labourers exist at the lowest standard, they will press down wages to the standard. Increase the area of their competition, and they will rush over it, and cover it, and their vacant place behind will be instantly supplied. Stop them out from that protected enclosure, and they will adjust themselves to their own

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limited former space. Ireland, Great Britain or the universe, will be always alike overpeopled. To such labourers as these, it is better then to confine them to Ireland, or to certain kinds of labour in the nation generally, but the fewer the better. If, by the expansion of the area open to them, their condition could be permanently improved, they would have a claim to consideration; but their condition would remain the same under any circumstances."

On this evidence of Mr. Elliott, I have no other comment to make, except that I consider the principle which he supports as worthy of the fullest consideration. If the weaving were confined to London and Norwich, with the districts and towns connected with these cities, I should not hesitate to recommend it for adoption. But it is necessary, on such a subject, to consider the state of the weaving throughout the Empire, of which I have had no opportunity. If active measures are to be taken to prevent the misery of the weavers, this seems to be that which is most likely to do good, and least liable to objection. The Central Board, having the circumstances of the weavers of the whole Empire before them, will be able to come to a decided opinion, and all that I can do is, to recommend it to their serious consideration.

There are several other subjects, some of which are pointed out in the instructions of the Central Board, and some have been suggested by witnesses in the course of inquiry, with a view to the benefit of the British manufacturers and weavers, respecting which I have now to report: these are, the repeal of the corn-laws; a domestic power-loom; schools of design; protection of patterns; fluctuating rate of wages; prohibition of pauper children being bound as apprentices to hand-loom weavers; stamps on indentures of apprenticeship; frauds in the measure of the work of the weavers; a more exact specification of the length and breadth of the pieces of goods to be manufactured; unjust charges on the weavers as to the weight of the silk; deductions for change of colour; Mr. Fielden's plan; price incapable of diminution. To the reports on these several heads, I shall add a report of the remedies for their distress proposed by the weavers themselves.

Repeal of the Corn Laws.

Very much less evidence has been offered on this subject in the course of the inquiry than could have been anticipated.

There are two modes of accounting for this fact: either the manufacturers and weavers attach little importance to the subject, or they consider the policy of the Government and Legislature so fixed, that it is useless to offer any opinion respecting it: some, however, have entered on the subject.

Some of the manufacturers of Norwich, and the weavers at Braintree, Colchester and Reading, are for the repeal of the laws which lay restrictions on the importation of foreign corn.

The manufacturers anticipate that the free importation of foreign corn would lower the price of provisions, and, as a consequence, lower the price of labour. If the price of labour were lowered, they consider that they could manufacture their goods at a cheaper rate, and consequently be able to come into the market in competition with foreigners in fabrics in which they feel they cannot do so at present. They consider that this is more particularly the case with shawls and other goods which require a great deal of labour to be bestowed upon them. They think that they at present suffer not only by the foreigner being enabled to obtain cheaper labour, and thereby to make some goods cheaper, but they also suppose that the foreign manufacturers are making progress, so that in time they will come into competition with the British manufacturers on more goods than they now do, not only in foreign markets, but also even in this country. They thence infer, that the corn-laws should be repealed, and should be repealed as soon as possible, as every year of delay enables the foreigners to make progress; and they consider that the time may arrive when the foreigners will be so perfect in their manufactures, that the repeal of the corn-laws may come too late.

The repeal of the corn-laws would therefore cause the extension of the sale of the British manufactures, and preserve the markets which we now enjoy.

The weavers at Norwich, according to the evidence of Mr. Samuel Dayne, himself a manufacturer, and opposed to the corn-laws, do not desire the repeal of these laws. They see that the manufacturers desire the repeal of the corn-laws, in order to obtain cheaper labour, that is, that they may have men to work for less

less wages than they get at present. But they say of what use would cheaper bread be to them, if their wages with which they buy it were to be reduced at the same time. They wish their own labour to be protected, but they wish the agricultural labourers to have their labour protected also. The weavers know that the sale of the foreign goods in this country of the same fabrics which they make, deprives them of just so much employment. They are desirous that foreign goods should not be introduced into this country to prevent them having work.

Now they perfectly see that the case of the agricultural labourer is precisely the same as their own. If foreign agricultural goods are sold in this country, just precisely to that amount will British agricultural goods be left unsold, and the result will be, that a certain number of British labourers will cease to be employed. Now they sympathize with their fellow-subjects in the country, and they do not wish them to be deprived of their employment. Besides this, they consider what would be the consequence to themselves of agricultural labourers being thrown out of employment.

At present, throughout the villages and hamlets of Norfolk, labourers out of employment take to weaving, and so do their wives and families. These agricultural weavers not only take away the labour of the weavers of Norwich, but they work also at a lower price. Of this evil they are at present most sensible, even beyond what they need be; and if an immense accession of destitute labourers were forced by necessity into their occupation, they apprehend that the consequences might be most serious, and depress them much lower than they are at present.

Mr. Samuel Dayne has endeavoured to represent to them, that if cheap provisions caused lower wages, still there would be an increase of trade, and a more constant demand for their labour, and therefore their condition would be much improved.

This argument, however, has no effect upon them. The idea of lower wages is sufficient to decide their minds, and they have no desire to touch the corn-laws.

The Norwich weavers are not unanimous on this subject.

None of the London manufacturers or weavers have expressed a desire to have the corn-laws repealed.

Mr. John Duce thus states his sentiments:—

"I am not for any partial measures to benefit me and my fellow-workmen at the expense of the rest of the community. I am not for any measures which will injure the agriculturists, whether proprietors, farmers or labourers. I wish an equal protection to all, and no one to be benefited at the expense of another."

The effect of the introduction of foreign corn will be, that the price must fall. The land in Great Britain of such a quality as now to afford only the same rent as pasturage land, and return the capital bestowed on its cultivation with the usual profit, if prices fall, will cease to be cultivated. A great number of labourers will be out of employment. On the other land which can still be cultivated, there will be a reduction of rent, equivalent to the fall of price of corn. The reduced price of corn will not be an increase to the national produce, but an alteration in the distribution. It will give to the consumers only what it takes from the proprietors of land and the proprietors of tithes. The capital vested in the purchase of such property would be seriously reduced in value, and all securities on land would be affected.

But no Government or Legislature could be justified in inflicting so much misery on the speculation of being able to produce a certain degree of good.

Also, at the present moment the attempt would be disastrous. The difficulties of carrying into effect the measures for amending the condition of the poor by the Poor Law Amendment Act, are such as it is not easy to overcome. If a large body of labourers were to be thrown out of employment, these difficulties could not be overcome at all.

But there is a still weightier objection. If the object intended by the parties who wish to abolish the corn-laws should, in regard to trade and manufactures, actually succeed, and Britain should employ a few millions more inhabitants in making goods which were exchanged for the corn of other countries, it would be the most fearful and hazardous condition for the liberty and independence of the Kingdom. In a year of a general failure of crops, the usual supplies would be stopped by the governments of the countries from which the supplies of corn came. Whence, then, were the millions to be fed? If a general war should break out, our manufacturing millions might lose their employment and their

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food at the same time. What power could restrain the distressed and disturbed millions at such a crisis? Certainly not such a power as ever has governed England yet. It must be a strong executive, subversive of the liberties we so dearly cherish. But if by such a sacrifice we should preserve peace at home, how in such case should we maintain our existence against our foreign enemies? Our liberty and independence must both perish together. No enlightened lover of his country can ever wish a population to exist on British soil which the British soil cannot feed.

I deem it right here to state, that this Report was sent to the office of the Central Board in the beginning of October last. To those parts treating on education, protection of patterns and the corn-laws, subjects which have since been before the Legislature, nothing has been added, and nothing has been withdrawn. On some other points additional information, which has been received, has been incorporated under the several heads.

A Domestic Power-Loom.

The idea of a domestic power-loom was first suggested, in the course of this inquiry, by Mr. Samuel Courtauld, a large manufacturer at Braintree, Bocking and Halstead, in Essex. The subject appears to be deserving of much attention, and will be best explained by a report of a conversation with that gentleman on the 2d of June 1838.

Notes of Conversations with Mr. Samuel Courtauld, on the 2d of June 1838.

Mr. Courtauld stated, that a preference is given to the power-loom, because goods can be made by it both cheaper and better than by the hand-loom.

There is a reasonable probability of a considerable amount of work being brought back to the hand-loom weaver, by the hand-loom being so improved as to possess the advantages of a power-loom. Domestic labour would then be restored to the cottages. Such a loom has not yet been brought out, from the attention of men of great mechanical science having been directed to the improvement of the power-loom. There is but little apparent difficulty in the case, nothing which we can reasonably suppose to be insuperable. The hand-loom must be made both of light weight and of small size, and means must be devised by which the same impulse which is now given to looms by the power, may be given to a single loom by a much smaller power, either by a treddle moved by the foot of the weaver, or by the exertion of an easy labour, by a child turning a winch. Such a loom would be applicable for the weaving of all silk goods, and also for all light fabrics in cotton. The great object to be effected, therefore, is to construct a loom sufficiently light, that by a machinery on the same principle as that of the power-loom, it may receive the moving impetus from the means described.

Mr. Courtauld stated, that the looms which the firm had in their factory, were actually so light, that they might be transplanted into the cottages of the weavers, and be advantageously employed. The question which naturally suggested itself was, "Why was not this done?" The answer was, that these looms were a discovery that gave a considerable pecuniary advantage, and no manufacturer engaged in trade for pecuniary profit, could reasonably be expected to give away the benefit of his own discoveries. If these looms were placed in the weavers' cottages, the discovery would very soon be pirated. By no possibility could the secret be preserved, when once in the cottages, whilst it was very practicable, for a time at least, when within the walls of the factory. He had no patent to protect his discovery. He was well aware of the defects of the present patent laws, and also with the inherent impossibility, in the nature of the case, ever to secure by law the exclusive right to many inventions. If an improvement on an engine be made, there is a certain difficulty overcome, and an engineer directing his attention to what has been done, is led to see what was the difficulty, and what was the result when that difficulty no longer existed. Now there may be twenty ways of effecting the purpose of removing a difficulty, when once it is distinctly seen; and however accurately a patent may secure one of the modes, that which is set forth, and specified in such patent, other modes of effecting the same thing may immediately be devised, and the benefit of the patent may be totally lost, although nothing may have been done which could be subject to an injunction in a court of equity, or of an action for damages in a court of law.

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There is one property of a power-loom which would be a great recommendation to a hand-loom of a similar nature, and that is the small space which it occupies, which is not above one-third of that required for the hand-loom now in use, and hence it would cause but little diminution to the comfort of the weaver and his family, by occupying much room. Such an improved hand-loom would not be adverse to the interest of the manufacturer, and therefore when once brought out into use, it would be encouraged. It would be a saving of capital; it would save the heavy outlay now sunk in the buildings of a power-loom factory, the expense of repairs, the expense of superintendence, and the very heavy expense of the power, whether obtained from the steam-engine, from horses or from water, and from the machinery set in motion by such power in order to set in motion the looms. A manufacturer could therefore afford to give a better price per piece to the weaver working at his own residence than he now gives in his power-loom factory, as wages would be the chief outlay, and there would not be the other outlay now specified. It is true that the manufacturer would have to provide these looms to his weavers, but that is no more than he does in his power-loom factory; so that as far as the expense of looms goes, it is the same whether the work were made in the factory or in the weaver's house. Such looms might be made to produce most of the cotton fabrics. At present, in the power-loom cotton factories, 14 or 15 looms are put in motion by a force equal to a one-horse power; but in the silk trade the looms are lighter, and as many as 40 looms are put in motion by a single horse power. It was observed to Mr. Courtauld, that however convenient it might be to have such looms as it is supposed may be introduced to afford domestic employment in the separate cottages, instead of crowding together the weavers into a factory, and more particularly however convenient such looms might be to afford employment to females, in those intervals of time when they are not engaged in household labour, yet that a discovery of such looms could not be expected to raise the wages of the men, and for this reason: the manufacturer now gets his work done in the steam factories at a certain expense, made up of wages to the superintendents and to the weavers, interest on the capital fixed in buildings, the expense of repairs, and the moving power and the looms; now he would no doubt be willing to pay a price to the weaver working in his cottage equal in amount to the wages in the factory, and the other charges therewith connected, but certainly would not go beyond this. He would necessarily be guided by his own profit or advantage, and he could not be expected to give a larger price for his work done in one particular way than that for which he could get it as well done by another.

The force of this observation was admitted; but then it was observed, that the increase of wages given in consequence of the manufacturer not requiring buildings and power, would be a considerable benefit to the weaver; also that the employment obtained by females in the intervals of domestic labour was a great good; but beyond all these, there was another decided advantage: such looms could be worked by young people, who, although sufficiently powerful to do the work, yet occasionally required the assistance of more mature experience and skill, which a weaver could supply. Now a weaver might derive much emolument by superintending and guiding the labour of four or five children, or by himself working a loom, and guiding those children when they required his aid.

As an instance of the successful reduction of the weight and size of a machine originally introduced into factories worked by power, and of bringing it into use in the workman's abode, the case was stated of the à-la-bar loom. That was originally a loom in the French factories worked by power. It was subsequently made much lighter. It is now in general use in the riband factories of Coventry, and there is an example of it at the factory at Battersea, near London.

It was easy to imagine the power-looms of our factories being in like manner reduced in weight, and introduced into the cottages. Superior workmanship might be required in their construction, but then there would be less material required in making them, so that the expense need not be very much greater for the one than for the other.

The attention of Mr. Courtauld was called to the fact, that power-looms were not employed in silk weaving, except in the hard silk branch, as crapes; and that the weavers of the soft silk even objected to the fly shuttle, because their attention was constantly required to their work, and they were often obliged to stop

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and mend threads and arrange their warp, and that at such times it was necessary to stop the loom, and this could not be done at all soon enough in the case of the power-loom; and in the case of the fly-shuttle the necessity of stopping was not so soon discovered, as when the common shuttle was used. From such facts it was to be inferred, that if an improved loom could be introduced into the cottages, we could not expect it to be available to the weaver of gros de Naples, satins, and all other descriptions of soft silk goods.

To this it was replied, that the power-loom had lately been greatly improved by a patent, by which it could instantly be stopped. But a great deal of the difficulty of the soft silk weaver, from which he required to stop so often, arose from less care being taken to wind the silk for him, preparatory to warping, than was taken to wind the silk for the power-looms. The silk for the weaver was now wound in a negligent manner, upon large cylindrical frames, and then rolled up on the cane to be afterwards transferred to the beam in such a manner that the threads were much entangled, which constantly occasioned the weaver to stop and arrange his warp. Such is not the case in winding for the power-loom. As to the delay to the hand-loom weaver, it was of less consequence, because his arm in throwing the shuttle soon got fatigued, and he was obliged to rest it, and he might as well be then engaged in disentangling his warp, as sitting looking at his work all the time. A weaver seldom complained of the fatigue of his legs, but always of the fatigue of his arms. Now if an invention was introduced which merely went as far as to throw the shuttle by means of a force which he exerted by the tread of his foot on a piece of mechanism, even that alone, if there was nothing else altered, would much facilitate weaving; and if at the same time care was taken to wind his warp properly for him, as is done for the power-loom, he could weave then a great deal more than he does at present, and make better work too, and in fact would equal the power-loom weaver. For every half hour that the weaver by the present system occupies in weaving, he is obliged to take a quarter of an hour to pick his porry, that is, to disentangle and mend his warp. By proper attention to winding, the process of warping would be much cheaper and better done than at present.

The attention of mechanical engineers of genius is now directed to improve the machinery in factories, which is work that yields a good remuneration, and has not been directed to improve the loom for the use of the weaver in his own house.

An inquiry was made of Mr. Courtauld, whether, seeing this was a matter of national importance, it would not be an expedient to offer a handsome reward to the engineer who, on or before a given day, would produce the best model of such a loom as was desired. The reply was, that such would not be an expedient mode of effecting the object intended. No doubt, by such a course, abundance of models would be obtained, of which the several inventors would have a high opinion; yet none of them might be such as would be practically useful, and even if so, there would be no certainty that the manufacturer would adopt any of them. The better course he considered would be, to offer a reward to the first manufacturer who would actually have 50 or 100 such looms at work in the cottages of his workpeople. There would then be a certainty that there was really a loom practically useful, and such as would be brought into general use.

It was stated to Mr. Courtauld, that some objection might be made to the utility of such looms, as it would increase the facility of giving employment to children at an early age, through which, unfortunately, they would be sent to labour, to the neglect of their education, and perhaps to the injury of their constitution.

To this the reply was, that already children, at a very early age, were put to labour. The Factory Act did not prohibit the employment of children of any age for 10 hours a day, when no other material except silk was employed, so that they might be sent at seven, eight or nine into throwing-mills. Then, besides this, the parents at home might put them to straw-platting at a very early age; and this was not unfrequently done in and about Braintree. The operation of the new Poor Law had tended to increase the early employment of children; as it was held, by the guardians of some unions, that a child of eight years of age was sufficiently old to gain a living.

Mr. Courtauld suggested an idea respecting the manner of paying the weavers, which he thought it might be well to circulate, as some might adopt it, though it never could become the subject of legislative enactment. At present, the crape

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manufacturer does a great portion of his work in power-loom factories; but he also gives out his work to hand-loom weavers. Whenever there is a slackness of trade, he discontinues his hand-loom weavers; a part of them at any rate, or perhaps the whole of them. The weavers being dismissed, put him to no expense. But he continues on his power-looms, because in them he has capital embarked, the interest of which he cannot afford to lose. When trade becomes brisk, he again employs his hand-loom weavers. Now it occurs to Mr. Courtauld, that a mode might be adopted by which the manufacturer might have an interest in keeping on his hand-loom weavers. If he were to pay them somewhat less wages, but to engage also to give them so much a week when he did not give them work, he would have an interest in so arranging matters as to keep them employed as much as was possible.

I consider the suggestion of Mr. Courtauld respecting a domestic power-loom to be deserving of much attention; and I therefore recommend it to the favourable notice of the Central Board.

Schools of Design.

On looking at the census which has been taken of the weavers in the Spitalfields district, it is most painful to see how small is the number of the weavers using the Jacquard loom, the instrument by which figured silks are woven. As the same time, it is too easily manifest, that a great abundance of figured silks is sold in London, and those silks are the produce of foreign looms. The natural inquiry is, What can be the cause? It cannot be the want of sufficient good material. The imports of the country show the contrary; and there is no question that more might be obtained if required. It is not the inferiority of the British throwster; for, with his improved machinery, he now has the superiority over the foreigner. The sole cause is, that figured goods are not made in this country in such taste as to secure a preference. The foreign appear to the eye more tasteful; and the British manufacturer, feeling unable to compete, desists from the production. Accordingly, he loses the most profitable part of his business, and the weaver loses the work which yielded to him the best price for his labour. The advantage of the French manufacturer over the British is thus described by Mr. John Wilson, one of the witnesses examined:—

"The French people are accustomed daily to have before their eyes the finest works of art, and naturally and imperceptibly acquire a good taste from that cause. There is an internal feeling in man which responds to what is beautiful, if his natural faculty be kept excited. In general, the salesman of a manufacturer in England is raised from the rank of an operative; he has never been accustomed to see the superior works of art; his sense of the beautiful is necessarily blunt: he has not the imagination and taste which will enable him to equal the men to whom the works of art have been familiar from their youth."

The remedy which this witness suggests appears very rational:—

"I think it would be beneficial if children from an early age were accustomed to view beautiful figures, as of flowers, statues, animals and elegant designs. In the present state of the arts, ten thousand copies of beautiful objects might be thrown off at a small expense, and might be displayed on the walls of national schools and other seminaries. If only a few should thereby be excited to a love of the fine arts, the expense would be abundantly recompensed: by such means we should become able to rival, or even excel, the pattern drawers of France."

The School of Design, established in Somerset House, this witness is of opinion, may be of use in raising up teachers, but cannot be of use to the description of persons required by the manufacturers. It is much too far off for persons engaged in manufactures; and such persons only can be expected to be of utility to the silk trade. That a practical weaver is the only person likely to be a useful artist, he thus shows—

"It is necessary that he should have a distinct knowledge of what the loom can easily effect, in order that he may be able not only to form patterns which will please the eye, but also such as can be made with the necessary economy and dispatch. In addition, young men intending to become artists, have ambitious and lofty ideas, and would not feel satisfied to go into a ware-room into

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the service of a manufacturer; but a man raised from the loom would consider it to be a great promotion, and would apply cheerfully his whole energies to the duties of his office."

The witness proposes that schools of a humble order should be established in the weaving districts, for the convenience of weavers who manifested a taste for drawing. As the district depends on the silk-trade for its prosperity, he thinks that the expense of such schools should be defrayed by local taxation.

That primary schools of design should be instituted as the basis of instruction, is in accordance with rational principles, and the experience in every other human accomplishment. The men who manifest talents, and acquire a certain degree of proficiency, might from these primary schools be transferred to schools of a higher order, to receive a finish to their education in their art.

It is only by training British artists, that our manufacturers can hope to rival our foreign neighbours, and be rescued from the slavery and disgrace of being obliged, at a long distance behind, to copy their patterns, and seek a portion of the refuse of the trade, by bringing goods imitating the foreigner into a market half satisfied, if not already glutted.

The evidence of Dr. Bowring before the Parliamentary Committee, on the state of the hand-loom weavers, explains the munificence with which the city of Lyons trains up her numerous artists. It is only by similar means that the figured branch of silk manufacture can be upheld in the British Empire. And as this country is able to rival any foreign country in every thing else, it will be a matter to be deeply deplored if it should not also acquire an equality in taste.

Perhaps it would be a good application of a part of the sum raised by the duties on foreign silk goods to devote it to the establishment of a central school for design in the Spitalfields district; or still farther, to establish schools of design in other great manufacturing districts. Perhaps it may appear to the Central Board advisable to recommend that a sum taken from the duties levied on foreign silks should be granted for the establishment of schools of design in Spitalfields, and in some of the country manufacturing towns. The object is of national importance, infinitely more so than the encouragement of the produce of such silk fabrics as are now usually sent abroad.

Protection of Patterns.

Some of the manufacturers complain that, after they have been at great expense and loss of time in inventing a new pattern, and getting it up, they are quickly deprived of the benefit, by the pattern being pirated by other manufacturers. Mr. Etheridge and Mr. Shickle, of Norwich, give evidence to this effect.

Mr. Samuel Fish, and a deputation of weavers, make the following curious statement:—

"The masters set a sad example to the men when they steal each others patterns?—There is no honour in that matter either amongst masters or men. About twelve years ago, a Quaker tried to get a pattern kept secret. He had a very solemn deed and declaration drawn up, and seals put on it, and had the men one by one into a private room before him and his warehouseman, and they signed and sealed with great solemnity, and those who could not write, made their cross. The men considered it a kind of oath, it was all so solemn; but it was to no purpose. The Quaker's pattern got known just as soon as if nothing of all this had taken place. It proves that honour will not bind either masters or men in such matters."

Mr. Etheridge complains much of the piracies of the manufacturers of Scotland:—

"The people of Paisley imitate our shawls, not less than four out of every six which we bring out. No sooner does one of our shawls, which we have designed and brought out, at great expense, take with the public, but within six weeks, or two months, the market is inundated with the Scotch goods of the same sort, and at prices which take away our profit. If one of our shawls be brought out at 60*s*., the Scotch have it in the London market, in a few weeks, at 45*s*., and so on in that proportion.

"They have agencies in London and Liverpool for procuriag patterns. They make no secret of their doings. They say that it is their interest to make such articles

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articles as have taken a sure lead in the market. They send their shawls into the market, perhaps at first, at a price only so far below us, as to secure a preference; but soon after they sell lower and lower, until they have inundated the market, and, by their cheapness, have swept away the profit of every body else. We require a legal protection against such piracy, beyond what the law at present affords to us.

"I have letters from our London correspondents, which will show the effect of the grievance of which I complain."

Mr. Shickle gives evidence to the same effect.

These unblushing piracies arise from there being no legal protection or copy-right to patterns or fabrics.

The period of time during which a protection is desirable for a pattern is six months. By that time the season is gone by, whether for winter goods or summer goods, and the inventor has either obtained his advantage, or he never will.

The effect of the want of protection is this, that there is less encouragement to venture money in the making of new patterns, consequently less motive for the cultivation of taste; but were products of good taste duly rewarded, more good patterns would be brought out, less foreign goods would be purchased, and British manufactures would be more in demand.

Mr. Etheridge in September last year stated, that a short while before he had brought out a shawl of a most beautiful pattern, and it was taking well with the public, and yielding a good profit; but he had just received a letter from his London agent, telling him that the pattern had been imitated by the Scotch, and advising him to discontinue making it immediately. When the Scotch take up a pattern, they inundate the market with such an abundance, that the article becomes quite common, and ladies of property will not buy a shawl of which there are so many imitations. Hence the Norwich manufacturer is obliged to abandon a profitable pattern, and thepoor weaver is cut short in his earnings, and obliged to spend a long time in getting up a new pattern, which is work for which he receives almost no pay. From dread of the piracies of the Scotch, the Norwich manufacturers also are prevented from laying up a stock in slack times; for as soon as the Scotch imitations come into the market, they would be obliged to "job" their shawls for whatever they could get. The poor weavers in the slack times are therefore as a matter of necessity discharged.

In confirmation of the evidence of Mr Etheridge, three of the Fill-over weavers, Messrs. James Bird, John Farman and Thomas Sursham, came as a deputation appointed by a general meeting to represent their case. They stated that they were sometimes two weeks, sometimes three weeks, and sometimes a month, but on the average they were three weeks, in preparing their looms to weave a Fill-over pattern; that they were never certain of enjoying the benefit of their labour it might occur in a month or six weeks that the pattern was copied, and brought into the market made of inferior materials, and the Norwich manufacturer was obliged to stop the pattern. Every Fill-over loom employed a weaver, two boys, and gave work to two girls to sew the shawls after they came from the loom. Hence the stoppage of a Fill-over loom threw five out of employment.

From a view of the facts above stated, I consider that it is most important for the success of British manufactures, as well as an act of justice, that patterns should be protected by law, and I recommend this subject to the consideration of the Central Board.

On a Fluctuating Rate of Wages.

The rate of wages hitherto paid at Norwich to the weavers, is according to a scale settled by the weavers themselves, and submitted to, if not formally agreed to, by the manufacturers. This scale is the same both for summer and winter, and is the same in slack trade as it is when all hands are in demand. Such is obviously different from what things would settle down into if left to themselves. But the manufacturers have been so accustomed to look upon this scale as authoritatively established, and to call it the fixed scale, although it is no otherwise fixed than the weavers demand it, and the manufacturers submit to it; though perhaps the manufacturers will say that their lives and properties would be endangered if they resisted it.

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Mr. Henry Willett, in partnership with his brother Mr. Edward Willett, carries on business on a very large scale, having sometimes from 800 to 900 looms employed, and at other times a much greater number. He considers that the condition of his weavers is very good when they are in employment, but that they suffer very much when out of work. He is of opinion that a rate of wages, fluctuating and adjusting itself according to the state of trade, would be much more advantageous both to the manufacturers and weavers. He states,—

"I have little doubt that the effect would be to procure for the weavers nearly constant employment throughout the year. In all the large manufacturing towns of the north, when a slackness comes in trade, the manufacturers do not turn away their hands. Rather than that they should be idle, they allow them still to continue; but as they cannot then have sale for their goods, and must lay them up, and wait for a market, they cannot afford to give the same wages as at a time when they can get an immediate sale. They therefore then reduce the wages, to make up for the loss of interest upon the capital so locked up; but in Norwich we cannot do any such thing. The people will not work but for the rate of wages, which can be afforded only when the sale of goods may be immediate. We are not afraid to turn away a great many of our work-people when we have no occasion for them, because, from the system forced upon us, we know that we can always find a large mass unemployed; and although weal ways keep a great many hands constantly employed, it is because they are superior workmen, and we consider that it answers our purpose to keep them at work, whether the goods are wanted or not. Within the last week, a demand having sprung up, we have had no difficulty in engaging 600 or 700 new hands. If the Yorkshire principle were acted upon here, we should not turn our weavers off, but reduce their wages in a slack time, and advance them when trade became more active. My impression is, that the average rate of wages would be fully equal to what is now paid at the time when he is employed, and the weaver would have the advantage of constant work, instead of being out of employment one-third of the year, and some much more."

It was pointed out to Mr. Willett, that the weavers working as they did only two-thirds of the year, were able to make as many goods as to give employment to the capital of the manufacturers; and therefore, assuming that they would consent to take less wages when a slack time came, and keep on weaving, it did not appear very obvious how their so doing would procure them employment all the year.

This difficulty Mr. Willett obviates by the argument, that if the system which he proposes were to be adopted, capitalists would be attracted to settle in Norwich. He says, "There is less capital employed in Norwich in manufacturing than in most towns in the Kingdom, and the reason is, that the capitalists know the system of wages at Norwich, and that the capitalists have but little advantage over the man of no capital; but if a fluctuating rate of wages were to be established, my impression is, that the capital employed in the Norwich trade would increase so rapidly, that not only the present weavers would be constantly employed, but a large proportion of the population for ten or twelve miles round the city. The situation of Norwich being so much nearer to the metropolis than the other large manufacturing towns, it would have a decided advantage if trade were to be carried on on the same principle."

Mr. Willett has never been able to get the weavers to act agreeably to his plan, in consequence of the interference of the committee of the union, and of their influence over the weavers. He says, "I have endeavoured as well as I could to make them see their own interest. I endeavoured to reason with the men whom I had employed at a Macclesfield fabric, by which they were getting about 9*s.* or 10*s.* a week; I pointed out to them, that if they would work on another article which we were making, at the same rate of wages which they were paying in Yorkshire, then, instead of 9*s.* or 10*s.* a week, they would gain 20*s.* a week; but though it was so clearly for their own advantage, I could have no influence on their minds. They said that the price offered for that article was below the list price, and they would not take it; and I could not convince them that the ultimate effect of their conduct would be to drive from Norwich a trade by which 20*s.* a week might be earned, and extend one by which they would get only 10*s.*

"Now I can give another instance in regard to a new fabric called mousseline de laine, a fabric with silk and worsted warp and worsted shoot. I had women working

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working at them, and earning 9*s.* or 10*s.* a week. The committee came and examined the fabric, and said, that, in conformity with the analogy of the list prices, I was paying too low a rate of wages for it. As I could not afford to pay more, and as the committee had sufficient influence over the weavers to prevent their continuing to weave it at the price which I had been paying, I took down the work, and gave up making it. We are, however, now making a similar article with a cotton warp, the wages for which are sufficiently low to enable us to make it to a considerable extent, and to compete with any other manufacturing town."

Mr. John Francis, sheriff of the city and county of the city of Norwich in 1838, objects to this plan of Mr. Willett, for precisely the same reason that Mr. Willett is desirous of establishing it,—because the large capitalist would accumulate a large stock of goods, and when the trade revived, he would advance the price of labour, and the smaller capitalist would have to make his goods disadvantageously.

Both parties are right. The present system is more favourable to the small capitalist. The goods cannot be made until there be a prospect of a speedy sale. The small capitalist, therefore, buys on credit the material which he requires; he sells his goods, obtains bills for them, which he discounts to take up the bills which he has given, and so manufactures chiefly on credit. But material which could not, after being manufactured, be sold until a distant day, could not be bought by the small capitalist, although to such men as the Messrs. Willett such a circumstance would be no inconvenience.

Mr. James Spalding, an operative weaver of great natural understanding, gave evidence on this subject:—

"You are, no doubt, aware of Mr. Willett's opinion, that the weavers would be better off, if they worked at reduced wages, during the slack times, when they now play. What do you think of Mr. Willett's idea?—I cannot controvert Mr. Willett's principles, but I am fearful how they might work; I am not decided one way or other. My friends in general think things would be better. Mr. Willett thinks that it would attract more capital to the town; but, until such capital came, I fear that the distress would be very great. No doubt, when the capital did come, we should then have better wages; but it would be three or four years first."

On the whole of this evidence, it is only necessary to say that the fullest protection ought to be afforded by the police, both to manufacturer and weavers, so that, if they choose to adopt a fluctuating rate of wages, they should be at liberty to do so, "no man forbidding them."

Prohibition of Pauper Children being bound Apprentices to Hand-loom Weavers.

The number of apprentices in the Spitalfields district is very small, that of apprentice boys employed in July 1838 being ascertained to be 61, and of apprentice girls 12.

Many of the weavers introduce their own children into the trade, but no legal apprenticeship deed is entered into; but it is not uncommon for a son or a daughter to serve precisely in the same way as if bound, the parent receiving all the earnings, and, on the other hand, supporting his child.

Parish apprentices are bound to weavers, and this has produced considerable abuse, of which the parish officers of Bethnal Green grievously complain.

In 1836 they received notices of 51 intended apprenticeships; in 1837, of 55, and in the first four months of 1838, they received 10.

Of the notices of 1836, they successfully opposed 15; of those of 1837, they successfully opposed nine; and of those of 1838, they successfully opposed eight.

When the notices are to be decided before magistrates acquainted with the district, as at Worship-street, the officers confidently look for a just decision; but in some instances the cases are heard before two magistrates, members of the board of guardians of the union from which the child is to come; and in such instances the officers state that their best efforts are in vain. The magistrates sanction the binding of the child. An improper motive is distinctly charged. The unions get rid of the children, as, in the short space of seven weeks, they acquire

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a settlement in the place of their apprenticeship. The parish of Bethnal Green suffers severely. The weavers, for the sake of the 6*l.*, 7*l.*, or 8*l.* premium, take the apprentices; and if, by any possibility, they can fix them with a sufficient fault, they get rid of them; and at all events the children are forced, by destitution, into the workhouse. About a dozen are thus thrust upon the parish every year. The parish also is put to expense in case any apprentices run away. The parishes then regularly pass them back to Bethnal Green, and all the costs and charges are to be borne.

The officers consider that this matter was overlooked when the Poor Laws were amended, and the remedy which they suggest is, that the right of settlement by apprenticeship, should not be gained by so short a period as seven weeks' service. It is obvious that there is an opening for great abuse, and lengthening the period of service to two or three years, would appear to be the best remedy.

The guardians of Bethnal Green will not now bind any child to the weavers, but prefer sending them as apprentices to the Barking fishermen. Such apprenticeship does not relieve them of the settlement of the boys, but it is a good trade, and for the benefit of the boys, and that is what decides their conduct.

Stamp on Indentures of Apprenticeship.

The Assistant Commissioners are instructed to inquire what effect would be produced by "a cheaper legal form of indenture of apprentices, and a reduction of the stamp duty to 5*s.*"

On this head, very few weavers had made any observations, and the reason is obvious, exceedingly few youths are now bound apprentices, except by the parishes.

There are, however, some who are taught the trade, on a verbal agreement, to save the expense of the stamp. For the benefit of these youths and their masters, an apprenticeship indenture would be desirable, to give to the master by law the authority over the youths which they so much need.

Reducing the stamp, therefore, to 5*s.* would be a benefit; but there appears no reason to believe that such reduction would either increase or diminish the number of weavers, or would in any way materially affect their condition.

Frauds in the Measure of the Work.

Work, according to law, is now measured by the yard, and not by the ell, as formerly. It is, however, usual to allow 37 inches to the yard in measuring the weavers' work, and nobody complains of it; it is on all sides understood. But many weavers bitterly complain, as Mr. Hoyles and Mr. Garland, that some masters take 37½ inches, and some 38; and one witness, Mr. Daniel Rush, states, he has had 39 inches taken. This is a palpable fraud and injustice, which the weavers cannot help seeing, and yet in slack times they dare not resent it, as the certain consequence would be, that they would be discharged, and they might be some time before they could get employed.

This practice is clearly a reducing of wages, but it is in a most dishonourable and aggravating form; and is the more so, that the extreme wretchedness of the weavers compels them to submit. The remedy proposed is, that the hook yard should be stamped in the same manner as weights and measures usually are; also, that there should be a severe penalty for using any other yard. This it is supposed would be effectual; for although, in case of fraud in the measurement, many would submit in sullen silence, now and then some one might get the penalty enforced, and the dread of this would deter from the injustice.

A more exact Specification of the Length and Breadth of the Pieces of Goods to be manufactured.

Some manufacturers, instead of making broad silks of the usual breadth of 20 inches, make goods of 19½ inches, 19 inches, 18½ inches and even 18 inches. This tends to deceive the unwary, and is a disgraceful fraud; but the buyers must use caution; and the fabrics and their dimensions are so many and varying, that no law could be made to regulate length and breadth, which would not from its vexatiousness do more harm than good.

Embezzlement.

No new remedy against this offence has occurred in the course of the inquiry. Happily the amount is almost nothing, as compared with what it is said to be in other districts of the Kingdom.

Unjust Charges on the Weavers as to the Weight of the Silk.

The weavers complain, that they are charged unjustly as to deficiency in weight of silk.

"Now," says Mr. Garland, "if the shoot has been taken out in wet weather, and gets damp, or is wound on the bobbins before it is thoroughly dry, then by the time it comes home there may be a diminution of the weight."

Such things are likely to occur; but it is also true that embezzlement sometimes does take place.

The Arbitration Act affords the only means of settling such disputes.

Unjust Allegations of Damage.

To this complaint the same remark is applicable. The means pointed out by the Arbitration Act can alone decide whether the manufacturer or weaver be in the right.

Deductions for Change of Colour.

The weavers complain, that the masters charge them with having produced a change of colour, and thereby diminshed the value of the work, and hence claim a deduction from the weavers' wages on that account. Now the weavers say that this is often very unjust. They keep their windows shut, even pasted down with paper, that they may not admit foul air. They shut out the sun's rays, and guard against every thing; yet sometimes the colour will change. They say it is the fault of the dyeing. It has been done badly, and so little money is now paid to dyers, that they cannot afford to do work as it ought to be done.

To this complaint the only answer is, that the Arbitration Act affords all the remedy that the Legislature can give; and if the weaver dare not assert his own right when it can be done so easily, we may lament his case, but can render no aid.

To many other such complaints the answer is, that the Legislature has already provided a remedy in the Act 5 Geo. IV. c. 96, "An Act to consolidate and amend the Laws relative to the Arbitration of Disputes between Masters and Workmen."

It is very true that the mode of deciding controversies under this Act occasions trouble and expense; but there is no mode of litigation whatsoever where such is not the case, and perhaps it is not desirable that it should be so. The trouble and expense under this Act are less than by any other mode. The weavers complain, that even when they gain, they are still losers in part, by not having full recompense for loss of time to themselves, their arbitrator and witnesses; but then, on the other hand, the 31st section of the Act relieves them, if found in the wrong, from the payment of all costs to the manufacturer, except where the magistrate shall decide that the "proceedings of the workmen were vexatious and oppressive," which will hardly ever be the case. The amount of costs to be paid to the weaver is left to the magistrate's own discretion, and probably it cannot be better arranged. Occasionally a magistrate may err, but there is no tribunal in this world not liable to such a casualty.

Mr. Fielden's Plan.

This plan is stated in the Instructions to the Assistant Commissioners in a quotation from a Parliamentary Report:—

"That returns shall be made every three or six months of the prices of weaving paid by the smallest number of manufacturers, who collectively make one-half of the goods of any description in the parish or township whence the returns are sent, and the average of the highest prices paid by a majority of such manufacturers shall be the lowest price to be paid in such parish or township during the succeeding three or six months."

The same operation being again repeated at the end of the first period, it is possible that wages might rise, by some one or more having paid wages higher than the minimum thus established, but wages never could fall, and no one could legally pay less.

The weavers every where are in favour of a rate of wages established by law; and so far as this plan proposes to establish a rate of wages, so far they approve of it; but no manufacturer or weaver has offered any evidence in support of the mode by which it is by this plan proposed to effect the object.

The difficulties of working out the details of this plan are insuperable. In the evidence before the Committee of Parliament, it is proposed to do it by getting returns by schedules from the manufacturers of the amount of work which they had made, and the prices which they had paid. But the fabrics are numerous. The last Spitalfields book consists of 80 pages, and the manufacturers are constantly varying the fabrics which they produce. Then how is it to be known whether they make a true return or not? and with so many motives to give statements at variance with fact, how is the truth to be ascertained?

But, assuming that all these difficulties are with much labour got over, and that a rate of wages has been at last established which never can be diminished, the result to some places will be most disastrous. There will be other towns and villages where the rate will be much lower. The manufacturers in all these towns, now knowing that their rivals in the towns where the rate of wages is high, can never lower their wages, manufacture boldly and on a large scale, and as they pay less, they may sell cheaper; and the consequence is, that the manufacturers where the rate of wages is high, cannot sell goods at all without loss, and are driven from the trade. The workman therefore, instead of being benefited, is deprived of his employment altogether.

These objections seem to decide the question respecting Mr. Fielden's plan.

Price incapable of Diminution.

In page 27 of the Instructions, the Assistant Commissioner is desired to consider "what would be the probable effects of a law which should attempt to provide that the money paid for weaving by the hand-loom each description of article, should be incapable of diminution."

The effect of fixing the same price for every part of the Empire has been shown in another part of this Report to be ruinous to the trade of that place where the price was out of proportion high. This would be the case whether it were a large town, or a remote rural district; but assuming that an endeavour had been made to fix a scale of prices adapted to each particular locality, and that such scale was to be declared incapable of diminution, as it is hardly possible that some errors had not been fallen into in framing the scale, the effect would be, that the ruin of the trade in localities where the scale was too high, would certainly follow, and there would be no means of preventing this result by the amendment of an original error.

Also if the scale of wages for any one article was fixed too high throughout the Empire generally, and that it could not be diminished, then it would occur that all the export trade of that article would be lost, as foreign manufacturers could undersell the British manufacturers in a common market.

Also as regards the home trade, the foreigners might then be able to undersell; but if prevented by a high duty, then the probability is, that some other fabrics would be brought out in rivalry of the article which was kept disproportionately high, and that article would soon pass into the long list of those fabrics once known, but of which the name alone remains in the books of the manufactures of former days.

Remedies proposed by the Weavers themselves.

In this inquiry into the causes of distress of the hand-loom weavers, and the remedies for the same, it would be a gross act of unfaithfulness to his duty in an Assistant Commissioner not to report to the Central Board what means of relief the weavers, the parties chiefly interested, themselves propose. It is essential that this should be done, in order that the Central Board, Her Majesty's Government, the Legislature, and the country at large, should know what are the views

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of the weavers, and the reasonableness or unreasonableness of complying with what they request.

A board of trade which will fix the wages to be paid for weaving is the grand remedy proposed by the weavers to obviate the misery which afflicts them. Whether it be in London or in Norwich, in Wymondham or in Sudbury, in Braintree or in Reading, or in any other town or village, with one voice, they all concur in this. Every other remedy without this, the weavers consider as totally unavailing. In general, it will be found that they have no definite idea as to the composition of the board of trade, or of its mode of operation, and, when pressed to enter into detail, they do it unwillingly, and, of course, give utterance to many things which will not bear investigation. Readily enough, the weavers, on matters being discussed with them, will admit the fallacy of many modifications of a board of trade; but still, after every consideration, they will adhere to the principle as the only effectual remedy for their misery.

Judging from the evidence given to the Committee of Parliament, and the uniform feeling expressed in the district in which my inquiries have been made, I make no doubt that it will be found that a board of trade to fix a rate of wages is the remedy universally desired throughout the United Kingdom.

On every occasion I have felt it my duty not to receive, in the first instance, from the weavers, their crude statements of their remedy, but to talk the matter over with them, and to request them to consider well, and weigh all the objections, and, having so done, then to give in writing that which, on full deliberation, they were desirous should be done; and this was pressed upon them, in order that their remedy might be proposed in its least objectionable form, and be judged of from its real principle, and should not be prejudiced from any adventitious and extraneous matter with which it might inconsiderately be associated.

Statements in writing were accordingly given in London, Norwich, Reading, Braintree and Colchester, and in other places the weavers declared their desire to have the remedy of a board of trade, but left the details entirely to Her Majesty's Government, or to the present Commission.

In some places the weavers also had other remedies, as the repeal of the corn-laws.

As preliminary, therefore, to any further observation, I lay before the Central Board the documents to which I have referred:—

Mr. Arthur Dear and a Committee of Weavers of Spitalfields.

"What remedy do you propose?—To remedy the evil, I would suggest that a commission should be appointed to ascertain the prices paid for every description of work made by manufacturers employing hand-loom weavers, and that the commissioners should strike a medium for every town, that medium to be binding on all parties. I would say, as far as regards the silk trade, take the highest price paid by the London manufacturers as the standard of comparison, so as to regulate other towns where the silk weaving is carried on, according to the circumstances of the place, so that every manufacturer might pay the same price in proportion to his weaver, as the manufacturer situate at a greater distance, so that, as regards the price paid for weaving, one manufacturer should have no advantage over the other in sending his goods into the market.

"Do you propose that the prices once fixed should be permanent and invariable?—No. I propose that the commissioners should have the power, from time to time, upon representations being made to them by the manufacturers and the weavers, to make such alterations as in their discretion the change of circumstances should appear to render necessary.

(signed) "*Arthur Dear.*"

The Weavers of Norwich.

"Sir, "Norwich, 16 April 1838.

"By a general meeting of delegates of the Norwich Hand-loom Weavers' Union, I am authorized to solicit your presentation of this paper to Her Majesty's Government, for the purpose of showing, in as brief a manner as the case will admit, the evils of which the numerous body of weavers in this city complain, and the plan they consider efficient for their removal. With the remote causes

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which led to the general depreciation in the value of labour, I am not authorized to interfere, further than to state, that the opinions delivered before Committees of the House of Commons in 1834 and 1835, are recognized and considered correct as reported by those Committees. Norwich has long been celebrated for fabrics composed of silk and worsted, and its prosperity as a manufacturing city. Machinery does not come in direct competition with its hand-loom weavers, nor do they suffer, in any thing like a material degree, by competition with hand-loom weavers of any other district, owing, no doubt, to the peculiarity of their fabrics. The master manufacturers were wont to meet and arrange prices, and for many years the trade was conducted in a highly creditable and satisfactory manner; but having no legal binding to their agreements, a portion of them, of small means and low characters, began to undermine, in a manner that shook the stability of the whole trade. Frequent attempts were made at general reductions, but successfully resisted by honourable masters and operatives until 1830, when 25 per cent. was taken off the weavers' wages (to put an end to the injurious competition, as was vainly stated by the friends of that reduction). Frequent have been the reductions, since that period, on various fabrics, and yet the competition, as now carried on between individual manufacturers in this district, must inevitably (if unrestricted by legislative interference), ruin not only the city, but the surrounding villages; whereas our trade consists of bombazines, paramattas, alipenes and Saxonies superior, mousseline de laine, gauzes, bandanas and low challis inferior. The former are sent into the villages surrounding Norwich, because the weavers there having land attached to their houses, with smaller rents to pay, and other advantages over city weavers, can work for less wages. Those are, therefore, wrought below list prices, while the city weavers are employed upon the inferior, and which are now their principal dependence. Our honourable masters are continually injured by this system, as well as the operatives of city and country. Because list prices for the inferior would give the countryman as much or more wages than his reduced ones on the superior; and instead of the unreasonable mode of employing those who require the highest wages, for the only competition (worth noticing) that our district is now engaged in with any other, they would have their legitimate trade, and as good and uniform wages as the circumstances of it would admit, which would enhance the condition of our citizens, without injury to a single village.

"The weavers of Norwich are fully aware that, owing to the entire withdrawal of cottage spinning, with the redundancy of labourers, caused by thrashing, drilling and other machines, and the farmers' inability to employ as many as they require, a wide field is open for the competitive system; but they also know that, according to the above regulation, they might be made useful and contented producers of fabrics that do not yield sufficient remuneration for city workmen; and that, by continual reductions, they would only be hurrying each other to starvation point, or even death itself.

"Various disastrous details might be named, but they almost all emanate from excessive individual competition; and the following plan for its restriction will, it is anticipated, meet satisfactorily the principal causes of complaint amongst the hand-loom weavers, and prevent those frequent strikes which produce such deplorable results to all parties concerned in them, and also to the country at large.

"General Plan of a proposed Bill for the better Regulation of the Prices of Hand-Loom Weaving.

"1. That, Her Majesty's Government, immediately after the passing of the Act, as designated above, shall issue orders for the master manufacturers and hand-loom weavers to meet distinctly in each of the manufacturing centres of the United Kingdom, and form a council of trade in each body, and that these councils shall confer or correspond, as occasion may require, to decide, within 14 days of the date in which the order is given, the lowest price to be paid for the weaving of the various fabrics of hand-loom goods given out in their division of the country, which price shall be the lowest paid for the weaving of such fabrics for the period of six months, or until the councils shall be regularly convened to advance or reduce the prices agreed to at last sittings.

"2. That

"2. That immediately on the publishing of this order, the master manufacturers shall meet in their respective centres, and elect by open vote two of their number for each fabric made or given out to be wrought within the boundary of their jurisdiction, and also that the weavers shall meet in their respective districts, and elect two of their number for each fabric, that is, two for each fabric elected by the majority of weavers belonging to all the districts convened at public meetings, regularly called; and that the councils of trade thus constituted, shall be elected annually, and shall meet once in six months, or oftener, if necessary.

"3. That all meetings to appoint councils, or of such councils when appointed, shall be convened by an order published in successive numbers of three leading journals in the district or districts where such meetings are to be held, signed by an authority recognized by Government, viz. mayor, sheriff, bailiff, or other official, as may be thought most proper.

"4. That in arranging or discussing the proper price of any fabric, should it at any time occur that the master's council is opposed to that of the operatives, and that they cannot agree in 14 days from the date when their first meetings were held on the subject, the contending parties shall forward their respective statements to Government, whose decision shall be final in all such cases, and be binding on the entire district.

"5. That the prices thus regulated by the councils or Government for each centre shall be published in a commercial gazette immediately after their semi-annual or other sittings.

"6. That after the various minimums are duly registered in the Gazette, should the masters of any district consider their prices too high, compared with other districts where work is given out of the same description, they may call another meeting of councils, if two-thirds of those engaged in making the fabrics complained of draw up, sign and forward a requisition to the aforesaid official, who shall, on receipt of such requisition, be authorized and ordered by law to call another meeting of the councils, in which their tables of prices shall be re-considered: precisely the same mode to be adopted when two-thirds of the workmen engaged on any fabrics, the prices of which they consider too low, shall draw up, sign and forward a like requisition as aforesaid.

"7. That the prices officially gazetted for each district, shall be the lowest paid to any district drawing work from such district.

"8. That when any district of the country remote from any centre of manufacturers draw work from two or more centres, the table-prices of whichever centre sends the greatest quantity of any fabric of work to such district or districts shall regulate the payments.

"9. That any district, not embraced in any of the centres of hand-loom manufactures, and which makes or may hereafter make goods to an equal extent with that of the lowest centre specified in this Act, shall, by producing evidence to that effect, become itself a centre, and have its prices regulated by its own councils.

"10. That two-thirds of the weavers in any small manufacturing district over which no councils preside, shall, by drawing up, signing and forwarding a memorial or petition to the official as aforesaid of its immediate centre where work similar to their own is made, have their prices regulated by its councils.

"11. That any manufacturer or agent giving out work under the table-prices agreed to or decided by Government to be paid in the limits of the centre in which such manufacturer or agent resides, shall be liable to a penalty of £. sterling for his first violation of this Act, and double that amount for every succeeding offence; £. sterling being awarded the informer in first cases, and £. sterling in every succeeding one."

"Sir,—I presume that, by the general equitable bearing of the above plan, you will perceive the journeymen weavers neither wish an unfair advantage over their employers, nor an unnecessary interference with the free laws of commerce in an extended sense. They merely wish to curb that excess of avaricious individual competition, which unnecessarily and reckless of ultimate consequences sacrifice the interests of thousands beneath its unhallowed shrine.

"Neither do they require the downfall or ruin of one locality for a temporary benefit to another.

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"They fairly and justly claim that remuneration for their labour which the circumstances of their trade will admit, independent of the avaricious tricks of heartless speculators.

"I am, sir, on behalf of the weavers of this city,

"Your obedient servant,

"*Samuel Fish*, Secretary."

"To Dr. James Mitchell,
Assistant Commissioner on Hand-loom Inquiry."

"From the WEAVERS of READING, engaged in the Manufacture of BROAD SILKS, to Dr. MITCHELL, one of Her Majesty's ASSISTANT COMMISSIONERS for Inquiry into the Condition of the HAND-LOOM WEAVERS.

Reading.

"Sir,—In compliance with your wish, we convened a meeting of our trade, and after the most mature consideration on the three general questions contained in your instructions, namely, the actual condition of the hand-loom weavers, the causes of that condition, and the means, if any, by which it can be improved, we determined on the following answers:—

"1. With respect to our actual condition, we know, by sad experience, that it is so bad that it is impossible, if we do our very utmost, to obtain such a living that mechanics who devote so much time as we do to our employment ought to have, and which other trades that require a great deal less mental exertion and close application get. For while bricklayers, carpenters, masons and others are obtaining from 18*s.* to 26*s.* per week for 12 hours per day, our average earnings, after deducting certain expenses incident to our business, are not more than 7*s.* per week, for which we are compelled to work 14 hours per day. There are therefore no inducements for people to put their children apprentices to our trade, and the only persons who have entered it for the last seven years are the children of those who are already in it, and who, for want of means, though they would gladly do it, cannot afford to put them to any other business.

"2. As to the causes, we consider the following as the principal:—

"1. The taking away of the book of prices, which was the only protection journeymen had against the disposition masters had, and still have, to lower the wages of those employed by them; and though the book of prices itself did not reach beyond the metropolis, yet the prices were influenced by it, and regulated in proportion to it all over the Kingdom, and had a great tendency to check that inordinate rage for competition and underselling which now reigns, and which, in our opinion, is the ruin both of masters and journeymen, and in order to meet which, masters have, in a great many places, had recourse to that plan, so ruinous to those who have served their regular term of apprenticeship, of employing any person they could at the lowest possible price, getting some one to teach them, and look after them, thereby producing inferior articles, which have brought certain portions of our manufacture into disrepute, and have reduced the value of our goods, and the price of our labour.

"2. The importation of foreign wrought silks, by which a heavily taxed community are brought into competition with untaxed foreigners, who, possessing greater facility of obtaining the articles from which their goods are manufactured, and living in a country where provisions are so much cheaper, are enabled to pour into this country their productions at so cheap a rate, that while the foreign artisan is getting an advantage, the British artisan is dragged down to starvation, by being forced into unequal competition with those possessing superior advantages.

"3. Power-looms have had a great tendency to injure us, by throwing a great influx of goods into the market at a cheaper rate, while great numbers of journeymen have been thrown out of employ in consequence, thus producing the two-fold injury of lower wages and less employ. We have had a proof of this in our own town, when about three years ago, 50 or more crape weavers were thrown out of employ, and the work they did was taken elsewhere to be made by power-looms.

"3. In

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"3. In answer to the third general question, What are the means, if any, by which our condition can be improved?

"1. We think a book of prices so regulated according to the distance from London, that it shall not be confined to the metropolis, but extend to every city, town, village or hamlet, where silk goods are manufactured, would materially benefit us, by placing the expenses and profits of masters more on a level, and prevent, to a very great extent, that cutting practice now so much in vogue.

"2. The taking off the duty from every material used in dyeing or manufacturing, as this would enable masters to sell low, without reducing the journeymen's wages.

"3. And, finally, we are of opinion, that there should be either a total repeal of the corn-laws, or a law passed for the total prohibition of foreign manufactured silks into this country. Our reasons for this opinion are these, our earnings are not equal to the price of provisions. If the corn-laws were repealed, it would bring down the price of provisions to the price of our labour, or if the admission of foreign manufactured silk was prohibited, it would, we believe, raise our wages to the price of provisions. One or the other, then, we believe to be absolutely necessary, as we think there is great injustice in allowing a free trade in silk goods, while there is not a free trade in corn.

"Signed on behalf of the Meeting,

"*Thos Skinner*, Secretary."

Colchester.

"At a MEETING of the HAND-LOOM SILK WEAVERS, resident at COLCHESTER, held on the 9th day of June 1838, for the purpose of considering the cause of the Distress now existing among HAND-LOOM WEAVERS generally throughout the Country, RESOLUTIONS were proposed and adopted, and the following REPORT unanimously agreed to:—

"We are of opinion that the true cause of the present distress is the inadequate price given for work, by reason of which to obtain the commonest necessaries of life, a man is compelled to work a great number of hours in the day, and to make at least three pieces in the same number of days he used formerly to make but two, and, consequently, a superabundant supply of manufactured goods is forced upon the market, which frequently has occasioned a sudden stop of work, and thereby reduced many to poverty. The demand also for such articles as are made principally for home consumption often fluctuates, which causes a great reduction in the price of goods, and a competition among the master manufacturers of this Kingdom, who, being unable to compete by any other means with manufacturers on the continent, are compelled to reduce the price of work to the lowest scale that is capable of affording even the meanest description of food. Under these circumstances, we are of opinion, that no better remedy can be found for improving our condition than a repeal of the corn laws, and that, instead of a restrictive, a free trade should be allowed in an article which so materially affects the comforts of the poor, whose only prosperity consists in their labour, a fair reward for which is all they seek. With this they would be content, and to this they consider themselves entitled, and we think a settled ratio of wages would be of great benefit to us and our masters, and we think a protection against the spirit of monopoly.

"Signed on behalf of the Meeting,

"*Wm. Pidington*."

Braintree.

"RESOLUTIONS of the BRAINTREE SILK WEAVERS' COMMITTEE.

"1. It is apparent to any one who is at all acquainted with the trade, that the present system of apprenticeship, so called, operates very injuriously to the interests both of the apprentice and of the man who may be said to be his own master.

"In the soft silk branch the present term of apprenticeship is usually 12 months, which no one can reckon sufficient who considers the great variety of fabrics which come under that denomination, or even only those which are

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made for one house. There is no attempt made (neither ought there to be) during this short period to introduce the learner to any of the higher branches of the art, but afterwards, if he is desirous of becoming a more efficient workman, he must have other teachers, and submit to fresh charges at a time when he fondly hoped to have been the sole master of his own scanty wages. Thus the facilities of entering into the art and mystery of silk weaving are apparent, rather than real, but, such as they are, they are found to be quite sufficient to induce many young men to quit some more regular and more healthful occupation for one of the most irregular and unhealthful; and when they perceive their mistake, it is too late to return, for the situations which they left, are already filled by others. Nevertheless many who had opportunity have left the trade, and we can now point to men who were silk weavers, but who now work at hedging and ditching. Upon these grounds we think it is desirable that the Government should order that all persons desirous of entering into the soft silk trade, should be bound apprentices for the term of three years at the least; and, to show that we do not wish for an odious monopoly, we approve of the stamp duty upon indentures being reduced to 5*s*., as suggested by the Instructions to the Assistant Commissioners. The crape weaving being less difficult than the soft silk, we think that a period of not less than one year would be sufficient for the purpose, if three years were found sufficient for the soft silk apprentice; and if any one who has served one year to the crape weaving chooses to enter into the soft silk trade, he ought to be under the tuition of some one for at least two years: for after such an one has been at the crape weaving for one year, he cannot be considered as knowing as much of weaving as one who has been at the soft silk for the same period of time.

"2. We are of opinion, that some plan should be adopted for fixing the price of weaving each description of goods, believing, as we do, that much of our present distress is occasioned by the unnecessary competition of some of the master manufacturers, who, to undersell their brethren, reduce the wages of the operatives, and so compel other masters (though unwillingly) to follow their example. As a correction to this evil, we think that the Kingdom might be divided into districts, similar to those of the Poor Law Unions, and that the prices should be the same throughout each district; for we are aware that distance from the metropolis, and other local peculiarities, require that the prices should not be uniform throughout the Kingdom. This plan, we think, if properly matured and carried into execution, would be found more productive of benefit than that proposed by Mr. Fielden, M.P., a plan which we need not particularize, as it is doubtless well known to the Commissioners. As to the machinery by which the proposed plan should be brought into operation, it is not necessary for us to offer an opinion, such things being better understood by those who are appointed by Her Majesty to hear our complaints.

"3. After making inquiries, and comparing statements, it is our firm conviction, that the clear average earnings of the soft silk weavers, working 14 hours per day, can only be reckoned from 6*s*. to 9*s*. per week, and those of the crape weavers, working the same number of hours, from 5*s*. to 7*s*. per week. These are facts; let them speak for themselves.

"4. The introduction of the power-loom into the crape-weaving has, we believe, been a great means of depressing the hand-loom weaver employed upon crape, and indirectly those employed in soft silk, as the best of the silk is used in the power-loom; and also where it is possible to execute orders by the power-loom, without the assistance of the hand-loom, we believe the former is always preferred, on account of the cheapness of production, as well as on account of the great capital invested in that kind of machinery.

"5. We have hitherto spoken of the more immediate causes that depress the hand-loom weaver; but they are rather the effects of one common cause, and are among the fruitful evils arising from the corn-laws. It would be superfluous here to enter into the motives that prompted the enactment of these laws, yet when we see the Legislature composed of landlords, and the determined hostility manifested by them to the introduction of any other class of the community into the House of Commons, and how carefully they provide that all shall possess land to a certain amount before they can have a share in making the laws; we cannot help suspecting that these laws were created for their own exclusive benefit,

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benefit, and not to promote the comfort and happiness of the whole people, which is the end and aim of all good governments. Hence arises their reluctance to educate the people, lest, understanding the cause of their misery, they should demand a cure of the evil. Hence, also, their shrinking from their responsibility to the people by frequent elections, extended franchise, and secret voting, which among an intelligent community would go far to remedy every evil in the State, as soon as it became apparent to the people. The real object of this unnatural law is to limit the supply of food, in order to obtain certain high prices for it, which could not be maintained by fair competition. It has not the redeeming quality of most other taxes, that of creating a revenue for the maintenance of Government, but aims at the entire exclusion of all foreign corn. It appears to us, that in proportion as the price of food increases, it being the great object for which all are striving, there must be a proportionate increase of labour given in exchange for it, and this increase of labour as naturally produces an increase of manufactured goods, which increase of goods is not demanded by a greater consumption, because the means of the great body of the consumers are not increased; hence arises those occasional gluts which spread poverty and misery among the people, and ruin among the small manufacturers. At such a time the goods cannot be disposed of but at a loss to the master, and he therefore shuts up his manufactory, or at best keeps his hands with not half employ; and these, being unable to maintain themselves during such a time, are driven up and down to seek for employment elsewhere, their houses broken up, and themselves reduced to wander in a country where riches are spread around them, which they have created, but are forbidden to touch. Hence arises an increase of crime, commencing in infractions of the Game Laws, and frequently ending in banishment for life, or a violent death. It was formerly the case that men, when thrown out of employ, and unable to keep themselves, would throw themselves into their parishes, and were thus reduced from independent men to parochial burthens, careless whether they ever returned to labour, and preferring (like those in high life) a state of idleness at the expense of others, rather than maintain themselves, a state always induced by a long cessation from active toil; or they have sold themselves to the Government, to be used as materials of war, and have left widowed women and fatherless children to be reared and maintained at the expense of the community.

"This has introduced a fresh train of evils to the weaver; for as a total cessation from manufacture has been succeeded by a rapid demand for goods, the masters have found a great difficulty in obtaining at once the number of efficient hands necessary to complete their orders, and they have had recourse to the mental power of the country to render themselves, as far as possible, independent of physical, and machinery has taken the place of the workman. The capital which should have circulated as wages among an industrious community, has become necessary to the purchase of the power-loom and the spinning-mule, and this to such an extent, that more than three-fourths of the capital of the cotton trade is thus fixed capital. This has made it necessary to turn over the small portion of floating capital so many times, to produce a remunerating profit for the whole, that it became necessary to work them night and day, and at as low a rate, and by as young hands as possible. From this has arisen the factory system, with all its train of evils—a system so justly denounced as "white slavery," but which has been forced on the manufacturers by the corn-laws, and which no Legislature can remedy, without first removing the cause. The partial removal of the prohibitory duties on foreign goods has also increased the evil; for those duties, impolitic as they always must be to a commercial country, were still the only counterpoise to the corn-laws which the manufacturer had to depend on. They were the bladders with which he, by hard struggling, kept himself above water, while his hands were tied by the agriculturist, and his body weighted by the fundholder. Another effect of the corn-laws on the hand-loom weaver has been, that while they have increased the price of food by 30 per cent., they have decreased the demand for his labour, by shutting out those customers who would gladly have taken our manufactures, if we could have taken corn in exchange; but this not being permitted, the artisan has been, as it were, shut up to starve, while their foreign neighbours have been obliged to obtain goods from other countries far inferior to this in mechanical resources; and in this way do we see our continental neighbours fast rivalling us in this respect, and cutting us off

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from the commerce of the world. Expedieney dictated the enactment of other laws for the prevention of the exportation of our machinery, and for keeping our own men of genius starving, lest foreign nations should make use of those talents which were rusting under the corroding effects of the corn-laws. But this was only another link in this chain of injustice, and a direct violation of the liberty of the subject; but like all other laws that run in opposition to the community, it was evaded by all who had the power to do so, and our best artisans were daily exported under false pretences, until our neighbours in France and other States can rival us in the texture and rapidity of production of most articles on which we are employed.

"Thus they have been permitted not only to obtain from us our foreign customers, but have also been admitted into our own market, to undersell and divide with us the little that was left to us by the acts of our law-makers. This competition has driven the manufacturer to a further reduction of wages, and the hands to combination among themselves to prevent them from so doing, and created an unnatural enmity between the classes mutually dependent on each other.

"These combinations have now been formed to such an extent, that, unless the manufacturer is relieved, either from them or the corn-laws, he must ultimately be driven to transport his capital to other countries not so encumbered, and leave a degraded, starving and infuriated population, increased to nearly double in number, to settle the account as they best may with the self-made lords of the soil, for whose benefit all this misery is entailed upon them.

"We think we have now shown some of the evils arising from the corn-laws, evils which affect, in a great degree, all classes of the community, but more especially those engaged in weaving. Were a repeal of these laws to take place, an immediate exchange of the surplus manufactures of this country for corn would be the consequence, and an immediate demand for the operatives, and, as the exports from Britain consist chiefly of wove goods and yarns, all engaged in these branches of trade would be particularly benefited, while the general supply of corn would reduce the price of all provisions, so that the whole of the working community would be better off; the demand for labour among the manufacturers would enhance the price of it, and wages must rise to a fair level, and every one having less to pay for bread, would have more to spend in the purchase of other goods, which would give a stimulus to other departments of trade. The shipping would be more profitably employed, and, consequently, a greater demand for seamen would take place. The absentees, who draw their wealth from this country, to spend it in others where provisions are cheaper, would be induced to stay at home, and spend it here, and the people of England would again know the blessings of peace and plenty. With respect to the agricultural population, the mere labourers could not be worse off, because they would be as necessary to the tillage as now; and, if a demand for labour in general raised the wages among mechanics and manufacturers, the agricultural labourer must be paid in proportion, as the best of them would seek other and more profitable employment in manufactories. The farmers, too, could not be worse off than now, as it is well known that the capability of the land is so nearly calculated, that a rent is always demanded to an amount that shall just enable the cultivator to pay his tithes and other charges, and leave barely enough to maintain his family on; and to such a pitch has this been carried, that ever since the present corn-laws have been in existence, the cultivators of the soil have been getting lower and lower, and, in many instances, have lost their capital, and have been reduced to ruin. Twice or three times their distress formed a prominent feature in the Royal Speech. Who then would lose? The answer is plain: the landlords and clergy, whose enormous rent-rolls and incomes have been swelled beyond all precedent by the operation of these laws. The landlord's rent must be reduced; and will this be done by a landlord legislature? Let us charitably hope it will. It has been stated by some, that the land would be thrown out of cultivation. If so, the poor man might then be able to get a piece, and it would soon be cultivated, and profitably too. It is also urged, that it would be turned into grazing land. No doubt such would be the case, as it would pay best in that way; but this would only increase the supply of meat, wool and dairy goods, and enable the people to taste that which now they are, for the most part, only allowed to look at.

"We

Braintree.

Report from *J. Mitchell*, Esq. LL. D.

"We have thus, in a short space, given our opinion on the operation of these laws, hoping that the Commissioners will give them that consideration which the importance of the subject deserves. We have neither time nor ability to devote to the formation of any plan of repeal on which a law may be founded, but must leave it to others whose education and experience have rendered them capable of such an undertaking.

"The Commissioners will, we are confident, pardon any expressions in the foregoing resolutions which may appear harsh or uncharitable, when they reflect that they come from men who must feel keenly whether they will or no, and who therefore may be expected to give expression to their feelings in a natural and unsophisticated manner.

"(signed by the Committee)

"*James Lindell*, and nine others."

Such are the remedies of the weavers themselves, after careful attention to the subject, and communicated by them in writing. I have felt it due to them, and to the Central Board, and to the Government and Legislature, to report in their own words the statements of the weavers of their own case.

On the political matter contained in them, I shall make no remark, except that I deplore that they should have mixed up political feelings at all on this question. I have already reported respecting the corn-laws and on apprenticeship; and the only subject which remains to be noticed is what is called a board of trade, or, its practical results, a scale of wages established by law; and this is the more important, as no doubt it is a remedy which will be found to be the desire of the whole weaving population of the United Kingdom.

As the reasons for granting or withholding this remedy must necessarily be an important feature in the Report of the Central Board, and as there must be far better opportunity of treating this subject with effect on a view of the state of the weaving population in all parts of the United Kingdom than from the experience of only one district, I shall not enter so largely into the subject as otherwise might be necessary, but notice a few points.

1. The Spitalfields Act, which is the grand example of a legislative regulation of wages, appears to have worked well so long as the silk trade was confined to Spitalfields, and all foreign goods were prohibited.

2. As soon as the silk manufacture extended into other parts of the Empire the effect of the Act was, that some fabrics totally left Spitalfields, and many other fabrics were declining; and but for the repeal of the Act, there was a risk that the silk trade would have left Spitalfields altogether. With the rivalry of foreign goods the Spitalfields Act must have been totally ruinous.

3. The magistrates are altogether unqualified to settle the wages which ought to be paid for the different fabrics. The last Spitalfields book contained 80 pages closely printed. It may be questioned if any of the Middlesex magistrates understood beyond a small portion of it. The magistrates never attempted to decide on any other principle than as to what in their opinion a man should have, in order to live comfortably, according to the price of provisions. The state of the trade and what could be afforded was beyond their means of knowledge. It was very pleasant to them to be liberal at other people's cost. The same causes which rendered it necessary to withdraw from magistrates the power to order parochial relief, will also render it prudent not to allow them to adjudicate the wages which other men are to pay. One fact in particular deserves attention. When wages were once raised in Spitalfields, the magistrates never did reduce them. There is a case on evidence stated to the Parliamentary Committee on the Spitalfields Act, where the masters and men both petitioned for a reduction, as the only means of preserving the trade of a certain fabric. Some of the men opposed the reduction, and the magistrates refused to lower the wages of making that fabric, and in consequence this part of the trade was lost.

4. It may be stated generally of any local board which had to regulate wages for any particular town or district, that it might be productive of the greatest mischief, by enacting a scale of wages beyond what the trade could bear. The

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necessary effect would be, that the manufacturers in such town or district would be undersold by the manufacturers of other towns, or by foreigners, and be obliged to discontinue their operations, and the workmen would totally lose their employment. The trade would be lost, and the proprietors of houses and tradesmen of all descriptions would severely suffer.

Of the injurious effect of such a local board, there was never any difficulty in convincing the weavers; but it sometimes occurred, that the observation which they made was, that there ought to be a uniform price paid throughout the whole Empire for the same fabric.

5. The effect of a uniform price throughout the whole Empire would be ruinous to the workmen in all the remote districts. The manufacturer residing in such remote districts is removed from the best markets for purchasing his raw materials, and the best markets for the sale of goods, and has to pay additional expense for travelling and for carriage, for postage and agency, in the place where his goods are sold. If he had no advantage in wages, he would not be able to compete with manufacturers in more favourable situations. So also a manufacturer who sends from a large town work to be done into a remote district, has the trouble and expense of making up his parcels and bales, with the expense of carriage and postages, and the expense of agency, and has not the means of seeing his work done under his own eye. If he had to pay the same wages in a remote district as in the town in which he resided, he would, of course, not send his work from home under what would then be such a disadvantage.

6. A uniform scale of wages, if only for a great town and a district round it, would be equally mischievous. Even as matters are now, with much lower wages, the weavers of St. Faith, Hevingham, Marsham, Bunwell, Talconstone, and other villages of Norfolk, are not able to obtain nearly so much employment as the weavers of the city of Norwich; and if the manufacturers were compelled to pay the same wages in those villages as in the city, then there would be no work at all for the weavers there residing. The weavers of the towns of Essex, Suffolk, Berkshire and Hampshire, which receive work from London, are paid lower wages than the weavers of London, but still have very little comparatively to do. If by law the wages were the same, the manufacturer would have no motive to send work out of London, and the weavers of these towns would lose their employment altogether.

When the weavers are pressed to state what kind of board of trade to fix wages they would wish to have, they will say a committee of masters and a committee of men, the one to negociate with the other, and to settle the prices of the different fabrics. When it is pointed out to them that probably the two committees would not agree, and that it would be necessary to have an umpire to decide between them, this is a new difficulty which in all probability had not been considered; but the result generally is, that they state that they wish the Government to decide between them, or rather a Board of Commissioners appointed by government for that purpose.

Certainly the least objectionable mode of a board of trade would be, for Government to appoint commissioners for the whole Kingdom, to decide all questions between the masters on the one side, and the men on the other, and with authority to make regulations and form districts within which the prices should be binding. This is the mode pointed out by the weavers of London and of Norwich.

Such an appointment would be hailed with acclamations by the weavers, but it by no means follows that the operation would be satisfactory. Gentlemen who devoted their whole time to the subject, would probably be able to acquire sufficient knowledge to enable them to understand the statements of both parties, and to arbitrate judiciously; but there is great reason to fear that there is no scale of wages which, under the present state of the Kingdom, and of the world at large, they could deem advisable to fix, which would give satisfaction, and hence the complaints would continue as much as now, or become much more vehement. The Government, the Legislature and the public would continue to be as much harassed as ever.

It is, therefore, to be feared, that no Government having a distinct view of the difficulties before them, would encounter the responsibility of appointing or keeping in office any board which should undertake this most difficult duty.

Under

Under all the circumstances, therefore, I submit that a board of trade with a view to fix wages ought not to be recommended. It is with much pain that, after anxious deliberation, I am forced to come to this conclusion; but if the Central Board shall see that the difficulties are not insuperable, I shall be rejoiced. The distress of the weavers is unquestionably great, and every practicable relief ought to be afforded to them.

With this I close my Report, which I fear will be thought to have been extended to too great a length; but I considered that it was the duty of an Assistant Commissioner to endeavour to collect, for the Central Board, the fullest information on all the subjects noticed in his instructions relative to the weavers within his district. I shall not attempt to make an abridged summary, feeling that it must be to the Report of the Central Board, taking a condensed and comprehensive view of the condition of the weavers thoughout the whole Empire, that the Legislature will look for the information which will assist in their consideration of any measures which may be proposed for adoption.

All which I humbly report, and I am, Gentlemen,

Your most obedient servant,

James Mitchell,

36, New Broad-street, London,
24 April 1839.

South-West of England.

REPORT from Anthony Austin, Esq., on the South Western Parts of *England*.

To Nassau William Senior, Samuel Jones Loyd, W. E. Hickson, and John Leslie, Esquires, Her Majesty's Commissioners for inquiring into the Condition of the Hand-Loom Weavers in the United Kingdom.

Gentlemen,

In compliance with the directions contained in your letter of 11th July, I left London on 19th, and proceeded to Gloucestershire for the purpose of meeting Mr. Miles, and making arrangements with that gentleman for a division of the district which had previously been assigned to him alone. Mr. M., having been occupied some months in this investigation, had collected a valuable mass of evidence, and was kind enough to give me the result of his experience as to the best method of conducting the inquiry. He had found that, by assembling persons representing all the interests concerned in this subject at the same time and place, a great deal of irritation was produced, and very little information obtained. He had, therefore, been compelled to abandon this mode of acting, and to hold separate meetings for parties *apparently* representing different interests, but whose welfare is *really* inseparably connected; viz., the manufacturer and the weaver, or other workman, who then furnished the required intelligence more readily and with greater freedom and accuracy.

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Previous arrangements.

I adopted, therefore, this manner of acting, and had no reason to repent of so doing.

My mode of proceeding was generally as follows. A few days before my arrival in a district, I caused an advertisement to be inserted in the county papers to this effect:

Notice.—Hand-Loom Weavers' Inquiry.

The undersigned, one of the Assistant Commissioners appointed to inquire into the State and Condition of the Hand-loom Weavers in the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, hereby gives notice, that he will be at on or about instant, for the purposes of this Inquiry. All persons who are interested in the investigation are requested to give any information they may possess regarding the same, at such time and place as the undersigned will, on his arrival at , appoint.

Anthony Austin, Assistant Commissioner.

Having arrived at the place named, I immediately called upon one or more of the most influential manufacturers (who are sometimes magistrates), to consult with them as to the best mode of conducting the business, for the purpose of obtaining the greatest quantity of information with the least disturbance of the ordinary tranquillity of the place, and to acquire from them a preliminary knowledge of the state of the district. The conclusion usually was this, that a meeting of weavers, and such other persons as were interested, should be summoned for one or more days, according to the extent of the district, by printed placards placed in the different manufactories, and by sending round one or more of their body to the adjacent villages, with intimation of the place and time appointed. I then proceeded to despatch letters to all the manufacturers, requesting their attendance on some day or days subsequent to that appointed for the workmen, and, with these letters, sent printed forms for them to fill up with extracts from their books, or such information as they might deem it desirable to give me. Letters were also written to the clergymen and to the dissenting ministers, requesting an account of the schools, and their opinion of the disposition of the working classes, more especially the weavers, to avail themselves of the means which already existed for giving instruction to their children, and also an account of the number of weavers' children who attended the different schools. To these letters, in one or two instances, no answers were returned; in two cases, they met a direct refusal; but, in general, every assistance which courtesy or kindness could render was afforded.

Mode of conducting the inquiry.

The overseers were also requested to give the aid of their knowledge and experience.

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Actuaries of savings' banks, presidents of mechanics' institutes, clerks of sessions and of poor-law unions, were also enlisted into the service. In addition to these means, a person was employed to go from house to house in the most important districts, and the result of his labours will be seen in the "Statements of Income and Expenditure," given hereafter.

Notwithstanding the announcement in the county papers, I found that great ignorance prevailed as to the object or extent of the inquiry, and (except among the weavers of the Trowbridge and Bradford districts) a considerable degree of apathy regarding it. Few were aware that such a commission had been issued, and none that it extended to the west of England, until the appearance of my notice; so that I found no one prepared, by a previous consideration of the subject, to give evidence further than on their own individual case.

The more difficult parts of the inquiry, that as to remedies, will therefore receive little elucidation from this Report.

Having now completed my inquiry in the district assigned to me by you, I proceed as briefly as possible to lay before you the result.

The counties visited by me were Somersetshire, Wiltshire, Devonshire and Dorsetshire; the different manufactures, of which weaving forms a part, carried on there, are,

1st. *Woollen, subdivided into,*

(A.)—Fine and second sorts of broadcloth.
(B.)—Fine and second cassimeres, or narrow twilled and fancy woollens.
(C.)—Blankets.
(D.)—Serges or long ells (as they were called in the East India trade, by the East India Company).
(E.)—Salisbury flannels, and linsey woolsey.

2d. *Linen sail-cloth, or canvas, or sacking, which may be subdivided into,*

1st. The strongest sort made for sails for large ships.
2d. Lighter sorts of canvas for sails.
3d. Ducks, dowlas, brinn, &c.
4th. Bedticking.
5th. Girth and chair-webs.

3dly. *Silk-weaving, admitting in the districts visited by me of only three sub-divisions:*

1st. Velvets.
2d. Satins, crapes, and smooth thin silks of various denominations.
3d. Ribands.

4th. *Hair-cloth for various purposes:*

1st. Chair seats.
2d. Sieve bottoms and stiffeners.

The sub-divisions I have made are probably not those usually made in the trade. I have kept in view, in my arrangement of them, only the earnings of the weaver.

I will now proceed to point out the districts in which each trade or manufacture and its sub-divisions are carried on.

(A.)

Woollen cloths, where made.

The fine, the seconds, and livery woollen broad cloths, are made at Twerton, at Frome, at Ilminster, and at Chard, in Somersetshire; at Bradford, at Heytesbury, at Melksham, at Chippenham, at Calne, and at Wilton in Wiltshire; and at Lyme Regis, Uplyme and Dorchester in Dorsetshire.

Price paid for weaving.

The price paid for weaving* is nearly uniform throughout the district, with the exception of that paid by some of the smaller capitalists, who (in their struggle against the more improved machinery of the extensive manufacturers) resort to low wages and other expedients injurious to the weaver.† Those who make cloth on commission for London houses, are generally also among the low payers.‡

The

* If not nominally the same, the difference of the mode of preparing the work makes it really so.
† Truck.
‡ The commission agents, having no interest in the market value of either the raw produce or the manufactured article, must necessarily derive their profit from the wages of the workman.

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The wages are not only uniform, but are sufficient to enable the weaver, when fully employed (by working from 12 to 14 hours a day), to earn a sum adequate to the maintenance of himself and family. The nominal sum paid for weaving a piece has not undergone much change for some years past, but the work done now requires more time and labour, and much greater attention than formerly; thus reducing the profits of the older and less skilful workmen very considerably as compared with former years; there is on the other hand some compensation by the improvement in spinning the yarn; the disadvantages, however, appear to outweigh the facilities.

The weavers of Trowbridge in their written address, which will appear at full length in this Report, state that "in the years 1810, 1811 and 1812, [from 26 to 28 years back,] and onward for several years, the chains were warped 42 yards, and contained 2,280 threads, the breadth on the loom was usually 42 inches, and the number of skeins of shoot required to be woven into it was 360, say 42 yds. long, 2,280 threads 42 in. wide, 360 skeins of shoot.

Alteration in the nature of the work.

At the present time the numbers are { 42 — 2,480 — 46 — 570 —

making a difference of 200 threads more, four inches wider, and 210 skeins more shoot. The 210 skeins of shoot will reach more than 38 miles,* the shuttle must therefore travel that immense distance in order to complete one piece of 42 yards in length.† Another fact is, the labour required to thresh in the shoot is trying indeed, causing extra time in beeting or mending the threads." All this is true, but on the other hand, the chains are better spun, and do not break so often; however, the manufacturers admit, that it takes more time to weave.

"A manufacturer states, that the work is now harder and more put together than formerly; the chains are, on the other hand, better, however, on the whole, it takes some days more to weave a cloth." This statement is corroborated by all and denied by none.

The greatest evil is the want of trade, this is felt more or less in different districts, but there are scarcely any which do not suffer from it.

(B.)

The manufacture of narrow woollens under the denomination of cassimeres, kerseynets, fancy stripes, tweeds, &c., is principally carried on at Trowbridge and Westbury.‡ The numerous weavers who are employed on these articles reside in the parishes and villages adjoining these towns, within a circle of seven or eight miles radius.

The wages paid for this sort of work are less in proportion to the time required for weaving a piece, than those of the broad cloth, and the trade is more fluctuating, particularly since the introduction of the present fashions.

The weavers too, are more numerous, and exceed the demand for their labour in a greater degree than do the weavers of broadcloth. §

It is in this branch of the trade, that the greatest distress exists.

(C.)

The next division, viz., blankets, has only been recently established in the counties I have visited, with a view of employing capital which had been (by the termination of the East India Company's charter) driven from the serge trade, and of giving occupation to the weavers and others thus deprived of their accustomed work. The labour of 14 or 15 hours will, in this trade, insure a small pittance to the weaver, with which he can contrive to procure himself the necessaries of life.

As it is a trade recently introduced, and only advancing step by step, no more hands are employed at it than can be kept on without much intermission. The earnings

* Thirty-eight miles, two furlongs, eighteen poles, one perch.

† A good weaver can throw 60 shoots in a minute in weaving narrow work; at this rate the shuttle would travel the distance in 15 hours 9 minutes, but as he would have to tread his foot 52,591 times, a good deal of breakage would ensue, and the time perhaps be doubled.

‡ At Frome, in Somersetshire; at Melksham, and at Calne, a small quantity is made of this description of goods, a part of which is woven by the weavers residing as above.

§ Because the smallest cottages will admit of standing room for one or two of these looms, and the strength required to wield them is not considerable.

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earnings of an able man, by a single loom, may be rated at, on an average, near 10 *s.* 6 *d.* a week; in no individual case exceeding 12 *s.* 3 *d.* Women are sometimes employed on the lighter sorts, and cannot earn more than 5 *s.*

(D.)

Serges.

The serges, or long ells, are made at Wellington in Somersetshire, and at almost every town and village in the county of Devon, giving employment to more than 3,000 looms * in the latter county, and nearly 600 looms at or near the first-named place.

The price for weaving these articles is so low, that, with the exception of the town and neighbourhood of Cullompton, the work is done entirely by women, and the trade or occupation of weaver no longer exists; those who do the work being the wives or daughters of agricultural labourers, of mechanics, or others.

The trade in this (or a nearly similar) article has undergone several changes.

When the French entered Italy, about the year 1797, and again when Spain quitted our alliance in order to unite with France, considerable quantities of these goods (exported by the manufacturers themselves) were confiscated, to the ruin of the exporters, and the consequent distress and privation of their weavers and other labourers.

Soon after this period, the Directors of the East India Company began purchasing this article for their China trade,† and their demand increased gradually to the amount of 240,000 pieces in a year, by regular quarterly orders, giving steady employment to, at least, 4,600 looms. The wages were not high, but still sufficient to induce some men to undertake it.

Combination.

A curious combination existed at one town‡ in Devonshire among the men, by whom it was forbidden to any female of their families to learn the art of weaving.

This combination lasted for nearly a century; till about the year 1825, when the necessity of having the assistance of the wife and daughters in the loom became imperative, and the infringement of this bye-law was silently acquiesced in. The prices at that town are still higher than elsewhere. Men continue to weave there.

When the East India Company opened to public competition their contracts and diminished the amount of their orders (these events followed close upon each other), the market price of the long ells was reduced, and the wages for weaving were consequently lowered 3 *d.* per piece, or 8 ⅓ per cent.

Since this time women only have been employed in all parts of Devonshire, except at Cullompton, and even there they now share the work with the men.

There are cases in which the husband earns from 7 *s.* to 9 *s.*, the wife 4 *s.*, a boy of 12 years 6 *s.*, one of nine years, or even younger, 4 *s.* each §.

Ever since the expiration of the East India Company's charter, the trade has been very fluctuating; it has been taken up by merchants, but not to the extent that it existed during the Company's charter, and in a much more irregular manner ‖. Many of the women who wove the serges, finding the trade uncertain, have procured other occupations ¶. One manufacturer observed, that if a great demand came suddenly upon him, he should not be able to find weavers in

* Cullompton	500	Totness	230
Crediton and N. Taunton	150	Buckfastleigh	200
South and N. Molton	200	Buckfast	500
Okehampton	530	Ashburton	660
Tavistock	100	Exeter	300
			3,370

The looms are not situated in the before-mentioned places, but there reside the manufacturers who give out work for so many looms.

† It is believed by some of the manufacturers here, that they were induced to do this at the request of the executive government, in order to relieve the great and sudden distress in which the part of Devonshire where these things were made was involved.

‡ Viz. Cullompton.

§ It will be evident, that a whole family can only be thus employed when the trade is flourishing.

‖ The company having the monopoly of the tea trade were enabled to force these long ells on the Chinese in exchange. The private merchants have not that power, and cotton articles being cheaper, have been very largely substituted for the serges.

¶ Glove-making, &c.

in his district; this is not the case generally. Married women do not earn more than 3 *s.* 6 *d.* a week, taking the average of a year; young girls can obtain 5 *s.* or more, by their labour, if unremitting.

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(E.)

The linsey-woolsey trade formerly employed 500 looms at Salisbury and the neighbouring villages. This trade has been gradually falling off, and at the present moment there are not 20 looms at work on this article. The power-looms in the north are supposed by the manufacturers here to have monopolized this trade. Linsey woolsey.

Salisbury flannels employed 500 looms in the same neighbourhood, which are now nearly all burned or otherwise destroyed. It is about 20 years since this trade began to decline, and the death or secession of the different makers (who were large capitalists) in a few years threw out of employment several hundreds of weavers and others; some found other work, some are dead, and a few old men (formerly weavers) are in the poorhouse.

The name of Salisbury flannel is almost extinct; but I am inclined to believe that the Portuguese market, where these went, is now supplied (though in a much smaller quantity) with an article nearly similar, under another name, the produce of the looms of Cullompton. Salisbury flannel.

The carpet trade is carried on at Wilton; there are two manufactories, both in a thriving condition, and the weavers (men) can earn from 12 *s.* to 18 *s.* a week. Many young boys and girls are also employed, some of whom are the children of weavers.

The linen * trade is carried on at Crediton, and at Plymouth, in Devonshire; at Bridport, Beaminster, and the adjacent villages in Dorsetshire; at Crewkerne and Yeovill and vicinities, in Somersetshire; and at Mere, and within a circle of four or five miles radius in Wiltshire. Linen trade.

The sailcloth trade employs

At Bridport and its vicinity	206	looms.
Crewkerne	420	—
Beaminster	120	—
Yeovill	300	—
Wincanton, Bourton, and Castle Carey	30	—
Crediton about	20	—
Plymouth	58	—
Total	1,154	

I do not give these as the exact numbers; indeed, I have reason to believe that there are several of which I have not got any account.

Strong able-bodied men can earn 13 *s.* a week at Bridport, and from 11 *s.* to 11 *s.* 6 *d.* at the other places where the wages are lower, in consequence, it is stated, of having to pay land-carriage for the manufactured article to Bridport, the place of shipment; rent and provisions are also cheaper. Earnings of weavers.

Very little variation has taken place in this trade for many years. During the war the wages were higher and the work was passed by the master in a more slovenly condition, and less firm in texture; but, on the other hand, the yarn is now spun by improved machinery, is much better, and gives a facility of weaving, which, according to the manufacturers' statement, is equivalent to the before-mentioned drawbacks.

The other sorts of canvas, ducks, &c. are generally woven by women, many of whom are weavers' wives, some are wives and daughters of agriculturists, &c.

Finding that no variation had taken place in this trade for many years, that no complaints were made by the weavers, or of the weavers by their masters; that no combinations or strikes, and no disagreements had taken place, and that until the present alarmingly high price of bread the people were contented,† I concluded

* By linen, I mean everything made of flax; it is said that 80 tons of flax are used weekly in a circuit of 20 miles round Bridport, one-tenth of which is of home growth.

† It must not be imagined that this contentment was produced by a rate of wages which enabled them to live in luxury. I have everywhere found that an Englishman's contentment is hard work, enough to employ all the hours of the day, with as much bread, cheese, and potatoes, as he can eat at night, and a little fuel to cook them; if they get meat once a week, they think themselves very fortunate. I will here quote the words of a manufacturer of woollens at Salisbury, which run thus: "Has never known one during his life and experience who would not rather work if he could get employment, than go to the parish: it is not the Englishman's character."

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cluded that further inquiry was needless, except as to the character and conduct of the men under such circumstances, which I shall speak of under that general head, and my time being limited, I passed over this district with as little delay as possible.

Sacking.

The sacking trade carried on also in this neighbourhood appears to be serviceable for using the inferior parts of the flax, which ought not to be (and are not here) put into the sailcloth. A few looms are generally attached to each factory; sometimes it is a separate business. The number of looms employed may be from 20 to 30. The money earned on this is not so much as on sailcloth, but the number of hands engaged in it is inconsiderable. Girth web is a separate branch, and does not pay the weaver well. Men cannot earn more than 8 *s.* Very few men work at it, and only at the superior sorts. Women cannot earn more than 2 *s.* 6 *d.* to 4 *s.* The number of looms in the district is 200, more or less; about 26 of them are worked by men.

Ticking.

On ticking, at Mere and surrounding villages, 500 looms are at work. The wages are low, but the weavers generally are capable of agricultural labour, are wanted by the farmers, and so have the benefit of the extra wages of harvest-tide, and of indoor work to resort to in winter. They may be considered, as regards wages, on a par with the agricultural labourer. They cultivate their gardens; and one, whom I visited, was actually employed at the moment (with work too on his loom) building with good stone and mortar an addition to his house; his weaving shop, with mud walls, was also of his own construction.

Education.

Education is not much attended to in these scattered villages, and one of the manufacturers says, "it is difficult to persuade the work people to send their children, even to a Sunday school, on account of the expense of decent clothing."

Children can weave at an early age, and are almost all brought up to the loom. This state of things has endured for 20 years at least; no abatement having been made in the weavers' wages.

In the year 1831, when the threshing-machine riots took place, the weavers joined the mob, and though not threatening or destroying any manufacturing machine, obtained a small advance.

Silk trade.

The silk trade is carried on at Chippenham and at Salisbury, in Wiltshire; at Ottery, St. Mary's, in Devonshire; and at Shepton Mallet, in Somerset.

At all these places it is of comparatively recent introduction, and has served to give the means of support to many, who were at the time of its commencement deprived, by the failure of some other trade, of their employment. It is probably, therefore, not on the same footing as at other places.

Hair-cloth.

The hair-cloth weaving employs 15 men, 12 women, and 7 children at Salisbury; about 20 women and 60 children at Warminster; and 2 men, 24 women and children at Castle Carey. It is at present, at the two latter places, in a prosperous state. The wages are by no means high, and it is only on the wider sorts that men can attempt to earn a livelihood; very few are employed.

Having now given a general sketch of the weaving which has fallen under my observation, I will endeavour to point out the state and condition of the weavers in each district, and, if any peculiarity exist dependent on locality, will give the best explanation of it which my evidence enables me.

At Twerton, in Somersetshire, there is only one firm engaged in any trade of which weaving forms a part, and there is no other factory within 12 or 15 miles distance. The proprietors have great skill in the manufacture of broad-cloths, and consequently the trade is flourishing, and the workmen are generally employed. There are 67 power-looms at this place, which have been at work for 10 years; at the present moment they employ 50 men, 16 women, and 1 boy at 17 years old. They are not on the modern most improved plan, and have not at any time since their introduction deprived the hand-loom weavers of work, for the weavers previously employed at the hand-looms were removed to these, and no greater number of young or inexperienced persons have been put to work in them, than would have been put in as many hand-looms.

The number of hand-looms in the factory and at the weavers' own houses is considerable. The weavers in the power-looms are able to finish a piece in rather

rather less time than those who work by hand, and their wages are regulated accordingly. When in full work both can earn from 12*s.* to 18*s.* a week. Report from Anthony Austin, Esq., on the South Western Parts of England.

At the time I was there, the American panic, as it is called, had compelled the proprietors to reduce the quantity made, and the weavers were earning through the year from 10*s.* to 15*s.* a week at a single loom. Many of their children are employed at the factory, and their wives also when their domestic occupations will permit. The men have the character of being steady, sober, industrious, and religious, but the instances of saving money are not supposed to be numerous. They join together to provide a fund for the support of the sick, the contribution to which is 6 *d.* per head weekly. Earnings of weavers. Benefit Club.

Very few of them have had the benefit of any instruction beyond reading and writing,* but they are sensible of the value, and even necessity in the present day, of giving the best education their means will afford to their children. There is a Sunday-school at the Established Church, and at every dissenting chapel, and there is also a school in the factory, to which great attention is paid by the proprietors; a day-school and an infant-school, under the superintendence of the vicar,† and several dame-schools in the village. Education.

AMOUNT paid for WAGES from 5 August 1837 to 4 August 1838, to Nine Power-loom Weavers, and also to Nine Hand-loom Weavers.

Wages of Power-loom Weavers from 5 August 1837 to 4 August 1838.

	First Half year.	Second Half-year.
	Net. £. s. d.	Net. £. s. d.
FIRST CLASS, 3 BEST WEAVERS:		
J. M.	28 6 4	21 18 –
G. E.	26 13 –	22 13 4
J. B.	26 6 3	22 18 –
	81 5 7	67 9 4
Average of the 3 men for each loom per week	1 – 10	– 17 3
The two half-years together average	– – –	– 19 –½
SECOND CLASS, 3 MIDDLING:		
I. T.	23 17 9	18 10 –
L. A.	22 10 3	18 8 6
J. R.	21 15 –	18 14 6
	68 3 –	55 13 –
Average of the 3 men each per week	– 17 5½	– 14 5¼
Average of the two half years are	– – –	– 15 10½
THIRD CLASS, 3 WORST:		
C. C.	15 10 3	13 3 6
T. S.	14 19 6	15 3 –
J. B.	15 9 6	14 7 8
	45 19 3	42 14 2
Average of each loom per week	– 11 9¼	– 10 11¼
Average of the two half years	– – –	– 11 4
Average of the whole	– – –	– 15 5

* Some can neither read nor write, some can read only, and a few can both read and write.

† No dissenters are admitted unless they conform to the Church discipline, and learn the Church catechism.

Report from Anthony Austin, Esq., on the South Western Parts of England.

Wages of Hand-loom Weavers from 5 August 1837 to 4 August 1838.

	First Half-year. Net. £. s. d.	Second Half-year. Net. £. s. d.
First Class:		
J. P.	25 19 5	21 3 3
G. S.	25 15 –	23 5 2
W. H.	24 4 9	20 11 2
	75 19 2	64 19 7
Average of the 3 men per loom per week	– 19 5½	– 16 6¼
Average of the two half years	– – –	– 18 –
Second Class:		
J. S.	21 6 9	18 17 2
J. H.	20 4 10	20 5 –
M. B.	20 5 –	16 15 7
	61 16 7	55 17 9
Average per loom per week	– 15 10	– 14 3¾
Or average of the two half-years	– – –	– 15 –¾
Third Class:		
G. S.	19 18 –	16 – 9
W. P.	18 8 –	17 8 –
J. J.	18 5 8	16 14 2
	56 11 8	50 2 11
Average per loom per week	– 4 7½	– 12 10¼
Or average of the two half years	– – –	– 13 9
Average of the whole	– – –	– 15 7¼

As during the last year the trade was much worse, during the last six months I have had the wages taken at two equal periods, which may perhaps be more satisfactory to you. The calculation is clear of all deductions.

S. W.

Education.

The population is about 3,000, of whom we may suppose 1,200 to be children under 13 years old, or 800 of age to be educated. The number returned is 665, or 80 per cent., and this does not include the dame-schools. Of 103 weavers' children, 75 are educated. An attempt is about to be made by the gentlemen conducting this establishment, (which, it is to be hoped, will be attended with success equal to their good endeavours,) to create and foster a taste for intellectual pursuits among their work-people. They are building a reading-room, which is to be warmed and lighted, and provided with suitable journals and periodicals and other books, and to be open until 9 or 10 o'clock at night, as experience shall show to be most proper. Tea and coffee, or similar refreshments, are allowed to be served here, at moderate prices, and the subscription will be very low; it is probable that this may be carried into effect; for the factory being isolated, and the proprietors particularly attentive to the moral and religious conduct of their operatives, and much interested in their welfare, have acquired an influence over them, which cannot be obtained by those who live in a more extensive manufacturing district, and will conduce much to the accomplishment of this object. The following statements of the weekly payments, together with the above table of annual payments made to sundry weavers, will show the pecuniary state of the weavers at this place.

COUNTY OF SOMERSET.—Twerton, near Bath.

STATEMENT concerning Families, Income, and Expenditure of the Families of Nine Persons weaving in Hand-Looms in the Factory, and of the same Number weaving in Power-Looms in the Factory.

Number.	Nature of Fabric Manufactured by Hand-Loom.	Number in each Family.	Number of Children.		Number of Persons Employed in each Family.				Number too Young or unable to earn Money.	Average Weekly Income of each Family.				Average Number of Working Hours.	Average Weekly Expenditure for Rent, Fuel, and Subsistence.			Number of Children that Attend			Number of Apprentices to Hand-Loom Weaving.
			Males.	Females.	In Factory.*	In Hand-Loom.	In other Occupation in Factory or elsewhere.	Total Number Employed.		From Factory.	From Hand-Loom.	From other Occupation.	Total Amount of Weekly Income.		Amount of Rent per Week.	Amount of Rates per Week.	Amount for Candles, Fuel, and Soap; and for Food and Clothing, per Week.	Pay Schools.	Free Schools.	Sunday Schools.	
										£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.		£. s. d.	d.	£. s. d.				
1	Broad cloth -	5	1	2	2	1	3	4	1	- - -	- 19 -	- 16 6	1 15 6	-	- 3 -	2½	1 12 4½	-	-	-	None.
2	Ditto - -	5	-	3	1	1	2	3	2	- - -	- 19 -	- 4 6	1 3 6	-	- 2 9	-	1 - 9	-	-	1	
3	Ditto - -	8	6	-	2	1	1	4	4	- - -	- 19 -	- 3 -	1 4 -	-	- 1 8	-	1 2 4	-	3	2	
4	Ditto - -	2	-	-	1	1	1	2	-	- - -	- 16 -	- 2 -	- 18 -	-	- 2 9	-	- 15 3	-	-	-	
5	Ditto - -	5	-	3	1	1	2	3	2	- - -	- 16 -	- 6 -	1 2 -	-	- 2 3	-	- 19 9	-	-	1	
6	Ditto - -	6	3	1	1	1	1	2	4	- - -	- 16 -	- 2 -	- 18 -	-	- 1 6	-	- 16 6	1	-	2	
7	Ditto - -	4	-	2	1	1	-	2	2	- - -	- 15 -	- - -	- 15 -	-	- 1 4	-	- 13 8	-	-	-	
8	Ditto - -	4	1	1	3	1	1	3	1	- - -	- 14 -	- 12 -	1 6 -	-	- 2 3	-	1 3 9	2	-	1	
9	Ditto - -	5	2	1	2	2	2	4	1	- - -	1 3 - himself and wife.	- 6 -	1 9 -	-	- 2 6	-	1 6 6	1	-	3	
9	Families -	44	13	13	14	10	13	27	17	- - -	7 17 -	2 12 -	10 11 -	12	1 - -	2½	9 10 9½	4	3	10	
			26															17			
	POWER LOOMS:																				
1	Broad cloth -	4	-	2	2	1	1	2	2	- - -	1 - -	- 2 -	1 2 -	11½ per day, or 69 hours a-week.	- 2 6	-	- 19 6	-	-	1	None.
2	Ditto - -	2	-	-	1	1	-	1	1	- - -	1 - -	- - -	1 - -		- 1 9	-	- 18 3	-	-	-	
3	Ditto - -	6	3	1	3	2	1	3	3	- - -	1 10 -	- 2 -	1 12 -		- 2 10	-	1 9 2	3	-	2	
4	Ditto - -	2	-	-	2	1	1	2	-	- - -	- 18 -	- 2 -	1 - -		- 3 -	-	- 17 -	-	-	-	
5	Ditto - -	9	3	4	5	2	3	5	4	- - -	1 7 -	- 10 -	1 17 -		- 2 9	-	1 14 3	-	-	2	
6	Ditto - -	2	-	-	2	1	1	2	-	- - -	- 16 -	- 2 -	- 18 -		- 1 8	-	- 16 4	-	-	-	
7	Ditto - -	3	2	-	1	1	1	2	1	- - -	- 12 -	- 3 -	- 15 -		- 3 10	-	- 11 2	-	-	-	
8	Ditto - -	7	1	4	3	1	2	3	4	- - -	- 12 -	- 6 -	- 18 -		- 3 -	-	- 15 -	-	-	2	
9	Ditto - -	2	-	-	1	1	1	2	-	- - -	- 12 -	- 6 -	- 18 -		- 3 -	-	- 15 -	-	-	-	
9	Families -	37	9	11	20	11	11	22	15	- - -	8 7 -	1 13 -	10 - -	-	1 4 4	-	8 15 8	3	-	7	
			20															10			
	Brought over - -	57	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	-	- - -	-	- - -	48			
	Total - -	103	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	-	- - -	-	- - -	75			

10 Persons (adults) working in hand-looms in the Factory earn 7 *l.* 17 *s.*, or for each loom 15 *s.* 8½ *d.* per week.
11 Persons (adults) working in power-looms in the Factory earn 8 *l.* 7 *s.*, or for each loom 15 *s.* 2¼ *d.* —

21

49 Persons employed, or per cent. 60·49 of the whole number.
32 Persons unemployed, or per cent. 29·51 —

81 Persons have for all expenses, viz. rent, rates, fuel, soap, candles, food, clothing, 20 *l.* 11 *s.* per week, which is equal to 5 *s.* 0¾ *d.* per head, per week.

18 Families, containing 81 persons, or 4·166 to a family; average weekly earnings of each family at all occupations, 1 *l.* 2 *s.* 10 *d.*, the lowest being 15 *s.*, and the highest 1 *l.* 15 *s.* 6 *d.*

* The hand-loom and power-loom weavers seem to be included in this Column as they do work in Factory, though it was designed only to include other employments in Factory.

STATEMENT concerning Families, Income, and Expenditure of Twenty-two Families of Out-door Weavers.

Number.	Nature of Fabric Manufactured by Hand-Loom.	Number in each Family.	Number of Children.		Number of Persons Employed in each Family.				Number too Young or unable to earn Money.	Average Weekly Income of each Family.				Average Number of Working Hours per Day.	Average Weekly Expenditure for Rent, Fuel, and Subsistence.				Number of Children that Attend			Number of Apprentices to Hand-Loom Weaving.
			Males.	Females.	In Factory.	In Hand-Loom.	In other Occupation.	Total Number Employed.		From Factory.	From Hand-Loom.	From other Occupation.	Total Amount of Weekly Income.		Amount of Rent per Week.	Amount of Rates per Week.	Amount for Candles, Fuel, and Soap, per Week.	Amount per Week for Food and Clothing.	Pay Schools.	Free Schools.	Sunday Schools.	
										£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.		£. s. d.		£. s. d.	£. s. d.				
1	Broad cloth -	1	-	-	-	1	-	1	-	- - -	- 11 6	- - -	- 11 6	-	- 2 3		—					
2	Ditto - -	2	1	-	-	1	1	2	-	- - -	- 12 -	- 4 -	- 16 -	-	- 1 6		—					
3	Ditto - -	2	-	-	-	2	-	2	-	- - -	- 19 6	- - -	- 19 6	-	- 3 -		—					
4	Ditto - -	5	1	2	3	1	-	4	1	- 8 -	9/9 each - 12 6	- - -	1 - 6	-	- 2 6		- 4 -	- -	1	-	2	
5	Ditto - -	2	-	-	-	1	1	2	-	- - -	- 10 -	- 11 -	1 1 -	-	- 3 -	None paid by tenant.	- 4 -	—				

(*continued*)

Number.	Nature of Fabric Manufactured by Hand-Loom.	Number in each Family.	Number of Children.		Number of Persons Employed in each Family.				Number too Young or unable to earn Money.	Average Weekly Income of each Family.				Average Number of Working Hours, per Day.	Average Weekly Expenditure for Rent, Fuel, and Subsistence.				Number of Children that Attend			Number of Apprentices to Hand-Loom Weaving.
			Males.	Females.	In Factory.	In Hand-Loom.	In other Occupation.	Total Number Employed.		From Factory.	From Hand-Loom.	From other Occupation.	Total Amount of Weekly Income.		Amount of Rent per Week.	Amount of Rates per Week.	Amount of Candles, Fuel, and Soap, per Week.	Amount per Week for Food and Clothing.	Pay Schools.	Free Schools.	Sunday Schools.	
										£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.		£. s. d.		£. s. d.	£. s. d.				
6	Broad cloth -	2	–	–	–	1	1	2	–	- -	– 10 9	– 2 –	– 12 9	–	– 2 3	,	—					
7	Ditto - -	2	–	–	–	2	–	2	–	- -	1 4 6 12/3 each	- -	1 4 6	–	– 2 6	,	– 4 –	—				
8	Ditto - -	6	2	2	1	1	1	3	3	– 1 10	– 13 6	– 1 6	– 16 10	–	– 2 9	,	– 4 –	,	1	–	4	
9	Ditto - -	12	4	6	1	2	3	6	6	– 4 –	1 – 3 10/1½ ea.	– 4 6	1 8 9	–	– 2 –	,	- -	,	1	–	6	
10	Ditto - -	1	–	–	–	1	–	1	–	- -	– 6 2	– 6 –	– 12 2	–	– 2 6	,	—	,				
11	Ditto - -	4	1	1	–	2	–	2	2	- -	– 19 6 9/9 each	- -	– 19 6	–	– 3 1	,	- -	,	2	—		
12	Ditto - -	3	1	–	–	1	1	2	1	- -	– 11 –	– 1 6	– 12 6	–	– 2 9	,	- -	,	–	–	1	
13	Ditto - -	4	1	1	–	1	1	2	2	- -	– 13 6	– 12 –	1 5 6	–	– 5 –	,	– 4 –	,				
14	Ditto - -	2	–	–	–	1	1	2	–	- -	– 10 9	– 3 –	– 13 9	–	– 1 6	,	—	,				
15	Ditto - -	2	–	–	–	1	1	2	–	- -	– 11 2	– 1 6	– 12 8	–	– 2 –	,	—	,				
16	Ditto - -	5	–	3	–	1	2	3	2	- -	– 10 6	– 15 –	1 5 6	–	– 3 –	,	- -	,	–	–	2	
17	Ditto - -	10	4	4	2	1	3	6	4	– 10 6	– 13 5 6/8½ each	– 12 –	1 15 11	–	– 2 3	,	- -	,	–	2	8	
18	Ditto - -	8	2	4	–	2	2	4	4	- -	1 10 9 15/4½ ea.	– 8 –	1 19 –	–	– 2 9	,	– 5 –	,	–	–	2	
19	Ditto - -	6	2	2	1	2	–	3	3	– 3 –	1 7 7 13/9½ ea.	- -	1 9 7	–	– 2 9	,	– 4 –	,	–	–	3	
20	Ditto - -	6	4	1	2	1	1	4	2	– 4 6	– 9 11	– 1 6	– 15 11	–	– 3 –	,	– 4 –	,	2	–	5	
21	Ditto - -	7	3	2	4	2	–	6	1	– 18 6	1 8 – 14/ each.	- -	2 6 6	–	– 3 –	,	– 4 –	,	1	–	3	
22	Ditto - -	5	2	1	2	2	–	4	1	– 6 –	1 3 – 11/6 ea.	- -	1 9 –	–	– 2 6	,	- -	,	–	–	2	
22	Families -	97	28	29	16	30	19	65	32	2 8 4	17 8 9	– – 6	24 8 10	–	2 17 7	Say	2 2 6	- -	8	2	38	
	Children - -	57	57		65			97											48			
	Adults - -	40																				

None paid by tenant

- Could not be ascertained -

Average weekly earnings of the 30 persons employed in hand-looms, 11 *s.* 7½ *d.*

Average weekly earnings of each family, 1 *l.* 2 *s.* 2½ *d.*

Average Number in each family, 4·45.

Average sum per week for food and clothing for each individual of the 97 is 4 *s.* 1¼ *d.*

Most of these are old people, and all work as they please. It is impossible to give any data of hours.

Of 30 persons working in hand-looms - -	3	earn under - - - - - -	7 *s.* - a week.
	6	from - - - - - -	7 *s.* to 10 *s.* —
	11	from - - - - - -	10 *s.* to 12 *s.* —
	9	from - - - - - -	12 *s.* to 14 *s.* —
	1	from - - - - - -	14 *s.* to 1 *l.* —
Total - - -	30		

At

Report from Anthony Austin, Esq., on the South Western Parts of England.

Frome.

At Frome, employment is given to about 350 looms, of which 220 are in the parish. More broadcloths are made here than narrow, or cassimeres; and the weavers of the former are generally better provided with work than those who weave the latter. The wages given by the larger capitalists at this place have undergone no material change for many years, and, at the present moment, the trade is comparatively * flourishing, but by no means adequate to give full employment to the weavers. The young, active and skilful can do well, and will obtain work for several looms; but a great majority, including those who are past 50 years of age, or who from any other cause do not possess the requisite skill, quickness of sight and strength, have great difficulty in getting sufficient employment to enable them to live.

This state of things produces a ruinous competition among the weavers, which some of the smaller capitalists take advantage of, in order to get their work done at lower prices. Some are said to employ only such weavers as will expend their money at a shop in which their employer has an interest.

The laws relating to "truck" cannot reach them, because no agreement is entered into. The tacit understanding is perfectly effectual.

Master weavers in this district are sometimes permitted to have as many as 10 or 11 looms, and, in order to make room for this number of looms, they rent houses which give them a vote. Some of these master weavers will get from the manufacturer more chains than they can weave on their own looms, and will put out the surplus to a weaver who has but one loom, at two-thirds of the wages they themselves will get, when it is brought in.

Evidence.

Evidence.

"Other weavers, who have looms of their own, cannot get above half work, and not being able to get a chain from a manufacturer, have taken one from these favoured workmen at journeymen's wages, thus virtually lowering the price of wages."

"Another disadvantage arising from having many looms in one house is, that the master makes the journeyman work more hours than he otherwise would, and thus more cloth is made by fewer hands."

I annex a return of the earnings of 204 looms in this parish, the average of each loom being 6 *s.* 2 ½ *d.* per week of 84 hours. These 204 looms are possessed by 149 families, containing 721 individuals, of whom 419 or 58 per cent. are unemployed, either being mothers, taking care of their children; children too young to work, or not getting work, and old people. Of the 721, 59 are employed in other branches of the manufacture; four at occupations not belonging to the cloth trade, and (as above) 204 in the loom.

* Compared with the Gloucestershire and Wiltshire districts.

COUNTY OF SOMERSET.—Parish of Frome Selwood.

STATEMENT concerning Families; Income and Expenditure of 150 Families.

Number.	Nature of Fabric Manufactured by Hand-Loom.	Number in each Family.	Number of Children.		Number of Persons Employed in each Family.				Number too Young or unable to earn Money.	Average Weekly Income of each Family.				Average Number of Working Hours per Week.	Average Weekly Expenditure for Rent, Fuel, and Subsistence.				Number of Children that attend			Number of Apprentices to Hand-Loom Weaving.
			Males.	Females.	In Factory.	In Hand-Loom.	In other Occupation.	Total Number Employed.		From Factory.	From Hand-Loom.	From other Occupation.	Total Amount of Weekly Income.		Amount of Rent per Week.	Amount of Rates per Week.	Amount for Candles, Fuel, and Soap, per Week.	Amount per Week for Food and Clothing.	Pay Schools.	Free Schools.	Sunday Schools.	
										s. d.	£. s. d.	s. d.	£. s. d		£. s. d.	d.	s. d.	s. d.				
1	Broad cloth	12	3	7	1	1	–	2	10	4 6	– 7 –	3 –	– 14 6	-	– 2 –	2½	3 –	9 3½	1	1	2	
2	Ditto	7	3	2	1	1	–	2	5	3 –	– 10 –	- -	– 13 –		– 2 –	–	2 –	9 –				
3	Ditto	4	1	1	–	1	–	1	3	- -	– 10 –	- -	– 10 –	-	– 2 6	–	2 –	5 6				
4	Ditto	10	2	6	1	1	–	2	8	2 6	– 13 6	- -	– 16 –		– 3 –	–	3 –	10 –				
5	Ditto	6	2	2	–	1	–	1	5	- -	– 10 –	- -	– 10 –	-	– 2 –	–	2 –	6 –				
6	Ditto	2	–	–	–	2	–	2	–	- -	– 7 –	- -	– 7 –		– 2 6	6	1 6	2 6				
7	Ditto	9	4	3	1	1	–	2	7	2 –	– 10 –	- -	– 12 –		– 2 6	4	2 –	7 2		1	3	
8	Ditto	4	–	2	1	1	–	2	2	2 6	– 8 –	- -	– 10 6		– 2 3	–	1 6	6 9				
9	Ditto	3	1	–	–	2	–	2	1	- -	– 14 –	- -	– 14 –	-	– 4 –	6	1 6	8 –				
10	Ditto	3	1	–	–	2	–	2	1	- -	– 10 –	- -	– 10 –		– 2 6	–	1 6	6 –				
11	Ditto	6	2	2	2	1	–	3	3	8 –	– 8 –	- -	– 16 –		– 2 9	2	2 –	11 1				
12	Ditto	4	–	2	–	1	–	1	3	- -	– 9 –	- -	– 9 –	-	– 1 6	–	1 –	6 6				
13	Ditto	5	2	1	–	2	–	2	3	- -	– 10 –	- -	– 10 –		– 2 9	–	2 –	5 3		–	2	
14	Narrow loom	7	1	4	–	2	–	2	3	- -	– 9 –	- -	– 9 –	-	– 2 3	4	2 3	4 –		–	1	
15	Broad loom	10	2	6	3	2	–	5	5	10 –	– 10 –	- -	1 – –		– 3 6	–	2 –	14 6				
16	Ditto	5	2	1	–	1	–	1	4	- -	– 10 –	- -	– 10 –	-	– 2 3	–	1 6	6 3		–	2	
17	Ditto	6	2	2	–	3	–	3	3	- -	– 8 –	- -	– 8 –		- -	6	2 –	5 6		–	3	
18	Ditto	1	–	–	–	1	–	1	–	- -	– 9 –	- -	– 9 –	-	– 2 6	–	2 –	4 6				
19	Ditto	4	1	1	–	2	–	2	2	- -	– 14 –	- -	– 14 –		– 2 6	6	2 6	8 6				
20	Ditto	4	2	1	–	1	–	1	3	- -	– 7 –	- -	– 7 –	-	– 1 6	–	1 3	4 3		–	1	
21	Ditto	6	4	–	–	1	–	1	5	- -	– 14 –	- -	– 14 –		– 2 9	–	3 –	8 3		–	4	
22	Ditto	7	2	3	2	1	–	3	4	2 –	– 8 –	- -	– 10 –	-	– 2 6	–	1 6	6 –		–	3	
23	Ditto	5	3	–	–	2	–	2	3	- -	– 9 –	- -	– 9 –		– 1 4	–	1 3	6 5	2	–	1	
24	Ditto	1	–	–	–	1	–	1	–	- -	– 10 –	- -	– 10 –	-	– 3 9	–	1 6	4 9				
25	Narrow loom	7	3	2	–	1	–	1	6	- -	– 12 –	- -	– 12 –		– 2 6	–	2 –	7 6		–	2	
26	Ditto	4	2	–	–	1	–	1	3	- -	– 9 –	- -	– 9 –	-	– 2 6	–	1 6	5 –				
27	Broad loom	9	6	1	1	2	–	3	6	3 6	– 18 –	- -	1 1 6		– 2 6	–	2 6	16 6		–	5	
28	Narrow loom	2	–	–	–	1	–	1	1	- -	– 14 –	- -	– 14 –	-	– 3 –	–	2 –	9 –				
29	Broad loom	3	–	1	–	1	–	1	2	- -	– 8 –	- -	– 8 –		– 3 –	6	1 6	3 –				
30	Ditto	4	1	1	1	1	–	2	2	1 6	– 7 –	- -	– 8 6		– – 9	–	1 –	6 9				
31	Ditto	3	1	–	–	2	–	2	1	- -	– 10 –	- -	– 10 –	-	– – 4	6	2 –	3 6				
32	Ditto	5	1	2	–	1	–	1	4	- -	– 10 –	- -	– 10 –		– 1 9	–	1 8	6 7		–	1	
33	Ditto	1	–	–	–	1	–	1	–	- -	– 6 –	- -	– 6 –	-	– 1 –	–	– 9	4 3				
34	Ditto	3	–	1	–	1	–	1	2	- -	– 6 –	- -	– 6 –		– – 6	–	– –	5 6				
35	Ditto	4	1	1	–	1	–	1	3	- -	– 10 –	- -	– 10 –	-	– 2 6	–	2 –	5 6		1		
34	Narrow loom	3	–	1	–	1	–	1	2	- -	– 6 –	- -	– 6 –		– 1 –	–	1 –	4 –		–	1	
35	Broad cloth	6	–	–	–	1	–	1	5	– 6	– 10 –	- -	– 10 6		– 1 7	–	2 –	6 11				
36	Ditto	6	1	3	–	1	–	1	5	- -	– 8 –	- -	– 8 –	-	– 2 –	–	2 –	4 –		–	3	
37	Ditto	5	1	2	1	1	1	3	2	2 –	– 10 –	2 –	– 14 –		– 2 –	–	2 –	10 –				
38	Cassimere	3	–	1	–	1	–	1	2	- -	– 8 –	- -	– 8 –	-	– 1 6	–	1 6	5 –				
39	Ditto	2	–	–	–	1	–	1	1	- -	– 7 6	- -	– 7 6		– 1 6	–	1 6	4 6				
40	Broad cloth	5	2	1	1	1	–	2	3	2 6	– 6 –	- -	– 8 6		– 1 6	–	1 6	5 6		–	3	
41	Ditto	1	–	–	–	1	–	1	–	- -	– 7 –	- -	– 7 –	-	– 1 6	–	– –	5 6				
42	Ditto	3	–	1	–	1	–	1	2	- -	– 8 –	- -	– 8 –		– 1 6	–	1 3	5 3				
43	Ditto	7	3	2	–	3	–	3	4	- -	– 12 –	- -	– 12 –	-	– 2 8	–	2 –	7 4		–	3	
44	Ditto	3	–	1	–	2	–	2	1	- -	– 10 –	- -	– 10 –		– 3 –	–	1 6	5 6				
45	Cassimere	2	–	–	–	1	–	1	1	- -	– 7 –	- -	– 7 –	-	– 1 6	–	1 6	4 –				
46	Broad cloth	2	–	–	–	1	–	1	1	- -	– 12 –	- -	– 12 –		- -	6	2 6	9 –				
47	Ditto	4	1	1	–	1	–	1	3	- -	– 8 –	- -	– 8 –	-	– 1 –	–	2 –	5 –				
48	Cassimere	7	3	2	2	2	–	4	3	6 6	– 7 6	- -	– 14 –		– 2 9	–	2 –	9 3				
49	Ditto	7	–	5	4	1	–	5	2	10 –	– 5 –	- -	– 15 –	-	– 2 –	–	2 –	11 –		–	5	
50	Ditto	4	2	1	2	1	–	3	1	1 6	– 6 –	- -	– 7 6		– 1 6	–	1 –	5 –		–	1	
51	Broad cloth	9	3	4	1	1	–	2	7	2 6	– 10 –	- -	– 12 6	-	– 1 6	–	2 –	9 –				
52	Ditto	10	3	5	2	1	–	3	7	2 6	– 10 –	- -	– 12 6		– 4 –	–	1 6	7 –				
53	Ditto	4	2	–	1	1	–	2	2	4 –	– 10 –	- -	– 14 –	-	– 2 9	–	2 6	8 9		–	1	
54	Ditto	5	2	1	1	1	–	2	3	2 –	– 9 –	- -	– 11 –		– 1 6	–	2 –	7 6				
55	Ditto	6	2	2	3	1	–	4	2	7 –	– 8 –	- -	– 15 –		– 1 –	–	2 –	12 –		–	3	
56	Ditto	5	–	3	–	1	–	1	4	- -	– 12 –	- -	– 12 –	-	– 4 –	6	2 –	5 6				
57	Narrow cloth	2	–	–	–	1	–	1	1	- -	– 9 –	- -	– 9 –		– 1 –	–	1 6	6 6				
58	Broad cloth	2	–	–	–	1	–	1	1	- -	– 10 –	- -	– 10 –	-	– 2 6	–	1 6	6 –				
59	Ditto	2	–	–	–	1	–	1	1	- -	– 6 –	- -	– 6 –		– 2 6	–	1 –	2 6				
60	Ditto	2	–	–	–	1	–	1	1	- -	– 15 –	- -	– 15 –	-	– 4 –	1 s.	– –	10 –				
61	Ditto	9	2	5	1	2	–	3	6	1 –	– 7 –	- -	– 10 –		– 1 6	–	1 6	7 –				
62	Ditto	4	1	1	1	1	–	2	2	1 –	– 12 –	- -	– 13 –	-	– 3 –	–	2 6	7 6		–	2	
63	Ditto	4	2	–	–	3	–	3	1	- -	1 1 –	- -	1 1 –		– 2 6	–	2 6	16 –				
64	Ditto	8	1	5	1	2	–	3	5	3 –	– 10 –	- -	– 13 –	-	– 3 –	–	2 –	8 –				
65	Cassimere	4	1	1	–	1	–	1	3	- -	– 10 –	- -	– 10 –		– 2 4	–	1 6	6 2		2	–	
66	Broad cloth	2	–	–	–	1	–	1	1	- -	– 8 –	- -	– 8 –	-	– 1 6	–	1 6	5 –				
67	Ditto	4	1	1	1	1	–	2	2	1 3	– 7 –	- -	– 8 3		– – 9	–	1 –	6 6				
68	Ditto	2	–	–	–	1	–	1	1	- -	– 10 –	- -	– 10 –	-	– 4 –	–	2 –	4 –				
69	Ditto	2	–	–	–	1	–	1	1	- -	– 6 –	- -	– 6 –		– – 9	–	1 –	4 3				
70	Ditto	6	–	4	–	1	–	1	5	- -	– 12 –	- -	– 12 –	-	– 4 –	–	– –	8 –		–	2	
71	Ditto	8	2	4	–	2	–	2	5	- -	– 16 –	- -	– 16 –		– 4 –	–	2 6	9 6				
72	Ditto	5	2	1	–	1	–	1	4	- -	– 9 –	- -	– 9 –	-	– 2 –	–	1 3	5 9				
73	Ditto	4	1	1	–	1	–	1	3	- -	– 8 –	- -	– 8 –		– 1 6	–	1 3	5 3				
74	Cassimere	2	–	–	–	1	–	1	1	- -	– 5 6	- -	– 5 6	-	– 1 6	–	1 –	3 –				

The average working hours may be taken at 14 per day, or 84 per week.

Nature of Fabric Manufactured by Hand-Loom.	Number in each Family.	Number of Children.		Number of Persons Employed in each Family.				Number too Young or unable to earn Money.	Average Weekly Income of each Family.				Average Number of Working Hours per Week.	Average Weekly Expenditure for Rent, Fuel, and Subsistence.				Number of Children that attend			Number of Apprentices to Hand-Loom Weaving.
		Males.	Females	In Factory.	In Hand-Loom.	In other Occupation.	Total Number Employed.		From Factory.	From Hand-Loom.	From other Occupation.	Total Amount of Weekly Income.		Amount of Rent per Week.	Amount of Rates per Week.	Amount for Candles, Fuel, and Soap, per Week.	Amount per Week for Food and Clothing,	Pay Schools.	Free Schools.	Sunday Schools.	
									s. d.	£. s. d.	s. d.	£. s. d.		£. s. d.	s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.				
Cassimere	5	1	2	2	1	–	3	2	5 –	– 4 –	– –	– 9 –	–	– 1 6	– –	– 1 3	– 6 3	–	–	1	
Ditto	5	1	3	3	1	–	4	1	6 6	– 5 –	– –	– 11 6	–	– 1 –	– –	– 1 6	– 9 –	–	–	4	
Broad cloth	8	3	3	2	1	–	3	5	5 3	– 8 –	– –	– 13 3	–	– 1 6	– –	– 2 3	– 9 6	–	–	2	
Ditto	4	1	1	–	2	–	2	2	– –	– 14 –	– –	– 14 –	–	– 2 4	– –	– 1 6	– 10 2	–	–	1	
Ditto	9	3	4	1	3	–	4	5	3 6	– 14 –	– –	– 17 6	–	– 1 4	– –	– 2 –	– 14 2	–	–	4	
Cassimere	4	1	1	–	1	–	1	3	– –	– 12 –	– –	– 12 –	–	– 2 8	– –	– 1 6	– 7 10	–	–	1	
Ditto	8	3	3	–	2	–	2	6	– –	– 9 –	– –	– 9 –	–	– 1 3	– –	– 1 6	– 6 3	–	–	3	
Ditto	2	–	–	–	1	–	1	1	– –	– 9 –	– –	– 9 –	–	– 2 –	– –	– 1 6	– 5 6	–	–	—	
Broad cloth	7	2	3	–	2	–	2	5	– –	– 15 –	– –	– 15 –	–	– 5 –	– –	– 2 –	– 8 –	–	–	—	
Cassimere	2	–	–	–	1	–	1	1	– –	– 5 6	– –	– 5 6	–	– 2 6	– –	– 1 –	– 2 –	–	–	—	
Broad cloth	2	–	–	–	1	–	1	1	– –	– 7 –	– –	– 7 –	–	– 1 9	– –	– –	– 5 3	–	–	—	
Ditto	5	1	2	1	1	–	2	3	1 6	– 8 –	– –	– 9 6	–	– 1 –	– –	– 1 6	– 7 –	–	–	3	
Ditto	1	–	–	–	1	–	1	–	– –	– 7 –	– –	– 7 –	–	– 1 –	– –	– –	– 6 –	–	–	—	
Ditto	8	3	3	1	1	–	2	6	2 –	– 9 –	– –	– 11 –	–	– 1 6	– –	– 1 6	– 8 –	–	–	3	
Ditto	7	–	–	–	1	–	1	6	– –	– 9 –	– –	– 9 –	–	– 1 9	– –	– 1 6	– 5 9	–	–	3	
Ditto	5	2	1	1	1	–	2	3	3 6	– 7 –	– –	– 10 6	–	– 3 –	– –	– 2 –	– 5 6	–	–	1	
Ditto	6	2	2	–	1	–	1	5	– –	– 9 –	– –	– 9 –	–	– 1 6	– –	– 1 6	– 6 –	–	–	4	
Ditto	5	–	3	–	1	–	1	4	– –	– 12 –	– –	– 12 –	–	– 4 –	– –	– 1 6	– 6 6	–	–	1	
Ditto	7	3	2	1	1	–	2	5	1 6	– 7 –	– –	– 8 6	–	– 2 6	– –	– 1 6	– 4 6	–	–	2	
Ditto	5	1	2	2	1	–	3	2	2 –	– 10 –	– –	– 12 –	–	– 1 8	– –	– 1 6	– 8 10	–	–	—	
Ditto	1	–	–	–	1	–	1	–	– –	– 6 –	– –	– 6 –	–	– 1 –	– –	– –	– 5 –	–	–	—	
Ditto	7	2	3	1	1	–	2	5	7 –	– 4 –	– –	– 11 –	–	– 3 –	– –	– 1 6	– 6 6	–	–	3	
Ditto	2	–	–	–	1	–	1	1	– –	– 15 –	– –	– 15 –	–	– 4 –	– 6	– 2 6	– 8 –	–	–	—	
Ditto	4	–	2	–	1	–	1	3	– –	– 8 –	– –	– 8 –	–	– 2 –	– –	– 1 6	– 4 6	–	–	—	
Ditto	6	3	1	–	1	–	1	5	– –	– 8 6	– –	– 8 6	–	– 1 6	– –	– 1 3	– 5 9	–	–	—	
Ditto	3	–	1	–	1	–	1	2	– –	– 10 –	– –	– 10 –	–	– 1 6	– –	– 1 6	– 7 –	–	–	—	
Ditto	4	2	–	–	1	–	1	3	– –	– 15 –	– –	– 15 –	–	– 5 –	– –	– 1 6	– 8 6	–	–	—	
Ditto	1	–	–	–	1	–	1	–	– –	– 10 –	– –	– 10 –	–	– 1 –	– –	– 1 6	– 7 6	–	–	—	
Ditto	7	4	1	1	1	–	2	5	1 6	– 10 –	– –	– 11 6	–	– 2 –	– –	– 2 –	– 7 6	–	–	4	
Ditto	2	–	–	–	1	–	1	1	– –	– 5 –	– –	– 5 –	–	– – 9	– –	– 9	– 3 6	–	–	—	
Ditto	4	2	2	3	1	–	4	–	6 –	– 18 –	– –	1 4 –	–	– 4 –	– 9	– 2 9	– 16 6	–	–	—	
Ditto	6	–	–	–	1	–	1	5	– –	– 7 –	– –	– 7 –	–	– – 10	– –	– 1 6	– 4 8	–	–	—	
Ditto	1	–	–	–	1	–	1	–	– –	– 10 –	– –	– 10 –	–	– 1 3	– –	– –	– 8 9	–	–	—	
Ditto	2	–	–	–	1	–	1	1	– –	– 6 –	– –	– 6 –	–	– 1 3	– –	– 1 6	– 3 3	–	–	—	
Ditto	4	–	2	–	1	–	1	3	– –	– 9 –	– –	– 9 –	–	– 1 6	– –	– 1 6	– 6 –	–	–	—	
Ditto	8	2	4	1	1	–	2	6	1 –	– 10 –	– –	– 10 –	–	– 1 6	– –	– 1 6	– 8 –	–	–	3	
Ditto	3	–	–	1	1	–	2	1	1 6	– 11 6	– –	– 13 –	–	– 2 6	– –	– 1 6	– 9 –	–	–	1	
Cassimere	9	1	6	2	3	–	5	4	2 –	– 15 –	– –	– 17 –	–	– 2 6	– –	– 2 –	– 12 6	–	–	—	
Broad cloth	5	2	1	–	2	–	2	3	– –	– 10 –	– –	– 10 –	–	– 2 6	– –	– 1 6	– 6 –	–	–	2	
Cassimere	4	–	2	–	1	–	1	3	– –	– 6 –	– –	– 6 –	–	– 2 –	– –	– 1 –	– 3 –	–	–	—	
Broad cloth	5	–	3	–	1	–	1	4	– –	– 12 –	– –	– 12 –	–	– 2 6	– –	– 1 6	– 8 –	–	–	2	
Cassimere	7	4	2	–	1	2	3	4	– –	– 10 –	6 –	– 16 –	–	– 2 6	– –	– 2 –	– 11 6	–	–	2	
Ditto	7	2	2	–	1	–	1	6	– –	– 7 –	– –	– 7 –	–	– 1 3	– –	– 1 6	– 4 3	–	–	3	
Ditto	8	2	4	–	2	–	2	6	– –	– 12 –	– –	– 12 –	–	– – –	– 9	– 2 6	– 8 9	–	–	3	
Broad cloth	6	1	3	–	1	–	1	5	– –	– 10 –	– –	– 10 –	–	– 2 6	– –	– 1 6	– 6 –	–	–	4	
Ditto	1	–	–	–	1	–	1	–	– –	– 6 –	– –	– 6 –	–	– 1 –	– –	– –	– 5 –	–	–	—	
Cassimere	6	1	3	–	1	–	1	5	– –	– 10 –	– –	– 10 –	–	– 1 9	– –	– 1 6	– 6 9	–	–	1	
Ditto	6	2	2	–	1	–	1	5	– –	– 10 –	– –	– 10 –	–	– 2 4	– –	– 1 6	– 6 2	–	–	3	
Broad cloth	2	–	–	–	1	–	1	1	– –	– 3 –	– –	– 3 –	–	– 2 –	– –	– 1 –	– –	–	–	– – supposed to be supported by donations of employer.	
Ditto	1	–	–	–	1	–	1	–	– –	– 5 –	– –	– 5 –	–	– 1 6	– –	– –	– 10 –	2	8		
Ditto	1	–	–	–	1	–	1	–	– –	– 10 –	– –	– 10 –	–	– 2 6	– –	– –	– 6 –	7	–		
Ditto	11	4	5	–	3	–	3	8	– –	1 – –	– –	1 – –		– – –	– 9	– 3 3	– 16 –	–	–	5	
Ditto	10	2	6	–	2	–	2	8	– –	1 – –	– –	1 – –		– – –	1 –	– 3 –	– 16 –	–	–	6	
Ditto	2	–	–	–	1	–	1	–	– –	– 9 –	– –	– 9 –		– 1 9	– 3	– 1 6	– 5 6	–	–	—	
Cassimere	7	1	4	–	4	–	4	3	– –	1 – –	– –	1 – –		– 4 –	1 –	– 2 6	– 12 6	–	–	—	
Ditto	3	–	–	–	2	–	2	1	– –	– 10 –	– –	– 10 –		– 2 4	– –	– 1 8	– 6 –	–	–	—	
Ditto	6	3	1	–	2	–	2	4	– –	– 10 –	– –	– 10 –		– 3 6	– –	– 1 6	– 5 –	–	–	3	
Broad cloth	3	1	–	–	1	–	1	2	– –	– 8 –	– –	– 8 –		– 2 6	– –	– 1 6	– 4 –	–	–	—	
Cassimere	7	2	3	–	2	–	2	5	– –	– 7 6	– –	– 7 6		– 2 6	– –	– 1 6	– 3 6	–	–	3	
Ditto	1	–	–	–	1	–	1	–	– –	– 7 –	– –	– 7 –		– 1 –	– –	– –	– 6 –	–	–	—	
Broad cloth	9	3	4	1	2	–	3	6	1 6	– 12 –	– –	– 13 6		– 3 9	– –	– 2 –	– 7 9	–	–	6	
Cassimere	6	3	1	–	2	1	3	3	2 6	– 10 –	– –	– 12 6		– 2 –	– –	– 2 –	– 8 6	–	–	—	
Ditto	7	2	3	–	1	–	1	6	– –	– 10 –	– –	– 10 –		– 2 6	– –	– 2 –	– 5 6	–	–	—	
Broad cloth	6	1	3	–	2	–	2	4	– –	– 15 –	– –	– 15 –		– 2 6	– –	– 2 6	– 10 –	–	–	—	
Ditto	4	2	–	–	1	1	2	2	– –	– 10 –	– –	– 10 –		– 1 3	– –	– 1 3	– 7 6	–	–	—	
Ditto	7	1	4	–	6	–	6	1	– –	– 10 –	– –	– 10 –		– 2 6	– –	– 1 6	– 6 –	–	–	—	
Ditto	1	–	–	–	1	–	1	–	– –	– 7 –	– –	– 7 –		– 1 –	– –	– –	– 6 –	–	–	—	
Ditto	1	–	–	–	1	–	1	–	– –	– 6 –	– –	– 6 –		– 1 –	– –	– –	– 5 –	–	–	—	
Ditto	4	–	2	–	3	–	3	1	– –	– 9 –	– –	– 9 –		– 1 6	– –	– 1 6	– 6 –	–	–	—	
Ditto	6	2	2	–	2	–	2	4	– –	– 9 –	– –	– 9 –		– 1 6	– –	– 1 6	– 6 –	–	–	—	
Ditto	7	4	1	–	3	–	3	4	– –	1 – –	– –	1 – –		– 4 –	– 6	– 2 6	– 13 –	–	–	4	
Ditto	3	1	–	–	1	–	1	2	– –	– 10 6	– –	– 10 6		– 3 6	– 6	– 1 6	– 5 –	–	–	—	
Ditto	5	3		–	1	–	1	4	– –	– 12 –	– –	– 12 –		– 3 6	– 6	– 1 6	– 6 6	–	–	—	
Ditto	4	–	2	–	1	–	1	3	– –	– 12 –	– –	– 12 –		– 4 –	– 6	– 2 –	– 5 6	–	–	—	
Ditto	3	1	–	–	1	–	1	2	– –	– 7 –	– –	– 7 –		– 1 –	– –	– 1 6	– 4 6	–	–	—	
Ditto	5	2	2	–	2	–	2	3	– –	– 9 –	– –	– 9 –		– 1 8	– –	– 1 6	– 5 10	–	–	—	
	723	188	236	59	205	4	268	420	7 – 6	73 14 6	11 –	81 6 –	–	16 3 7	13 – ½	12 – 2	52 9 2	3	5	145	

The average working hours may be taken at 14 per day, or 84 per week.

SUMMARY OF THE FOREGOING TABLE.

STATEMENT CONCERNING FAMILIES, INCOME, AND EXPENDITURE OF 149 FAMILIES.

Number.	Nature of Fabric Manufactured by Hand-Loom.	Number in each Family.	Number of Children. Males.	Number of Children. Females.	Number of Persons Employed in each Family. In Factory.	In Hand-Loom.	In other Occupation.	Total Number Employed.	Number too Young or unable to earn Money.	Average Weekly Income of each Family. From Factory.	From Hand-Loom.	From other Occupation.	Total Amount of Weekly Income.	Average Number of Working Hours per Week.	Average Weekly Expenditure for Rent, Fuel, and Subsistence. Amount of Rent per Week.	Amount of Rates per Week.	Amount of Candles, Fuel, and Soap, per Week.	Amount per Week for Food and Clothing.	Number of Children that attend. Pay Schools.	Free Schools.	Sunday Schools.	Number of Apprentices to
	Broad cloth & cassimere.									s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.		s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.				
150	Families -	723	188	236	59	205	4	268	420	140 6	1,474 6	11 –	1,626 –	84	323 7	13–½	240 2	1,049 2	3	5	145	
1	Deducted from No. 123.	2	–	–	–	1	–	1	1	– –	3 –	– –	3 –	–	2 –	– –	1 –	—	–	–	–	
149		721	188	236	59	204 (a)	4	267	419	140 6	1,471 6	11 –	1,623 –	84	321 7	13–½	239 2	1,049 2	3	5	145	
			424												573 s. 9½ d.							
			60		add for omission, according to p. —*See* note.																	
			484																			

Observations.

(a) Of these 204 -

6	earn - -	3 s. per week, or under.
15	between - -	3 s. and 4 s.
50	earn between -	4 s. and 5 s. per week.
50	- ditto -	5 s. and 7 s. ditto.
34	- ditto -	7 s. and 9 s. ditto.
42	- ditto -	9 s. and 12 s. ditto.
6	- ditto -	12 s. and 15 s. ditto.
1	above - -	15 s. ditto.
204		

	s.	d.
Average of the earnings per week for each loom - - -	7	2½
Hire of tackle and rent of looms to be deducted - - -	1	–
	6	2½

	s.	d.
Average weekly earnings of each family at all occupations -	10	10½
Deduct hire of tackle, &c. - - - - - - -	1	–
	9	10½

The lowest being 7 *s.* and the highest 21 *s.* 6 *d.*
Average number of individuals in each family 4·83.

267 in all occupations earn 1,623 *s.*, or per head 6 *s.* 0¾ *d.*
Number of persons unemployed 419, or 58·27 per cent.
Number of children educated 153, or 36 per cent.
Suppose too young to be educated, 36.
Leaves uneducated, 28.

721 persons have an income of 1,623 *s.*, equal to 2 *s.* 3 *d.* per head per week, but deducting 573 *s.* expended for rent, fuel, soap, and candles, there will remain for food and clothing only 1 *s.* 5½ *d.* per head per week.

There are but two apprentices in Frome.

15 single. 3 widows or widowers. 131 married couples. 297 adults. 424 children. 149 families, containing 721 individuals, or 4·83 to each family.

Note.—

Note.—J. Sims thinks that there may be about 20 more weavers in the parish, say - - - - - - - 20
This list - - - - - - - - - - 204
224 in all.

Report from Anthony Austin, Esq., on the South Western Parts of England.

Of these 204 weavers, it will be seen that 121 earn between 3*s.* and 7*s.* weekly, and no more, by the looms.

The number of children educated appears to be 153, or about 36 per cent., of whom only eight have any instruction beyond the Scripture reading and psalm singing of the Sunday school, as the preceding table will show.

Education.

I was denied access to the books of the employers of most of these weavers; nor could I obtain extracts from them. I had therefore no means of verifying this statement. But, comparing it with those few which I have been able to check, I judge it to be about 30 per cent. too low. I need scarcely add, that even with this addition, the result must be a state of considerable distress and privation for more than half the number, at the ordinary price of provisions. What then must be their situation at the present moment, when bread is sold at 11 *d.* the 4 lb. loaf?

Notwithstanding this distress and privation, few of them have been reduced low enough to take refuge in the poor-house, as the following Return will show. Of the 2,810 persons receiving relief, only 70 are weavers or belonging to the families of weavers, and these persons (though placed in the column of able-bodied) I have reason to believe are old or sick; one of them, whom I visited at his cottage in Beckington, I know to be so.

COUNTY OF SOMERSET.—Frome.

STATEMENT of the Number of Hand-Loom Weavers, Agricultural Labourers, and other Persons receiving Relief in this Union; distinguishing the Able-bodied Hand-Loom Weavers from the Infirm.

NAME of PARISH.	Number of Hand-Loom Weavers receiving Relief this Day.			Number of Agricultural Labourers receiving Relief this Day.			Number of other Persons receiving Relief this Day.			Total Number of Persons receiving Relief this Day.			Of the foregoing, state how many Hand-Loom Weavers are Able-bodied.			How many Hand-Loom Weavers Infirm.		
	Men.	Womⁿ	Childⁿ	Men.	Womⁿ	Childⁿ	Men.	Womⁿ	Childⁿ	Men.	Womⁿ	Childⁿ	Men.	Womⁿ	Childⁿ	Men.	Womⁿ	Childⁿ
Frome	9	9	48	2	2	7	225	446	406	236	457	454	9	9	48	—		
Rodden	-	-	-	1	-	-	5	7	3	6	7	3	—					
Road	-	-	-	-	-	-	23	38	32	-	-	93	—					
Beckington	-	1	3	-	-	-	40	69	68	-	-	177	-	1*	3	—		
Standerwick	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	4	3	-	-	9	—					
Berkly	-	-	-	-	-	-	21	50	34	-	-	105	—					
Woolverton	-	-	-	-	-	-	10	11	10	-	-	31	—					
Laverton	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	6	8	-	-	16	—					
Lullington	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	8	8	-	-	20	—					
Tellisford	-	-	-	-	-	-	6	11	20	-	-	37	—					
Farleigh Hungerford	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	8	7	-	-	18	—					
Norton St. Philip	-	-	-	-	-	-	8	15	23	-	-	46	—					
Kilmersdon	-	-	-	-	-	-	33	88	63	-	-	184	—					
Writhlington	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	2	2	-	-	5	—					
Hardington	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	4	9	-	-	17	—					
Hemington	-	-	-	-	-	-	8	19	33	-	-	60	—					
Buckland	-	-	-	-	-	-	9	21	31	-	-	61	—					
Elm	-	-	-	-	-	-	7	19	28	-	-	54	—					
Orchardleigh	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	-	-	-	3	—					
Nunney	-	-	-	-	-	-	28	51	55	28	51	55	—					
Marston	-	-	-	-	-	-	13	30	10	13	30	16	—					
Witham	-	-	-	-	-	-	30	42	60	30	42	60	—					
Wanstrow	-	-	-	-	-	-	14	22	34	14	22	34	—					
Cloford	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	16	8	4	16	8	—					
Leigh	-	-	-	-	-	-	26	46	37	26	46	37	—					
Mells	-	-	-	-	-	-	37	50	62	37	50	62	—					
Whatley	-	-	-	-	-	-	13	22	22	13	22	22	—					
	9	10	51	3	2	7	617	1,108	1,085	407	573	1,728	9	10	51	—		
	70			12			2,810			2,708								

22 August 1838.

D. Wright.
T. W. Langley.
Jno. Beachim.
James Nutt.

* This man, I know, is on the sick-list. I presume that several of the others are placed in the wrong column by mistake.

PARISH, and DESCRIPTION of SCHOOL.	ESTABLISHED CHURCH.						DISSENTERS.						TOTAL.						—
	Children.		Of whom are Weavers' Children.		Totals.		Children.		Of whom are Weavers' Children.		Totals.		Schools.		Children.		Children Educated at all Schools.		
	At Day Schools.	At Sunday Schools.	At Day Schools.	At Sunday Schools.	At all Schools, E. C.	Of whom are Weavers' Children.	At Day Schools.	At Sunday Schools.	At Day Schools.	At Sunday Schools.	At all Schools.	Of whom are Weavers' Children.	Number of Sunday Schools.	Number of Day Schools.	At Sunday Schools of all Persuasions.	At Day Schools of all Persuasions.	Total Educated.	Of whom are Weavers' Children.	
FROME SELWOOD.—SOMERSET.																			
National School, by subscription	336	- -	27	- -	- -	- -	- -	- -	- -	- -	- -	- -	- -	- -	- -	- -	- -	- -	- - Reading, writing, arithmetic, the Catechism, and 39 Articles.
Woodland School, built by the Marquess of Bath	72	- -	6	—															
St. Peter's Sunday School	- - -	380	- -	24															
Woodland - ditto	- - -	104	- -	6															
Old Church - ditto	- - -	383	- -	85															
Trinity Church ditto	- - -	125	- -	26															
Infant School, by subscription	60	- -	7	—															
Infant School, by the bounty, and under the inspection and control of an individual family.	50	- -	11	—															
Almshouse Daily School	32	- -	1	- -	- -	- -	- -	- -	- -	- -	- -	- -	- -	- -	- -	- -	- -	- -	- - At this school are all boys, who are apprenticed to trades.
Asylum Daily School	40	- -	4	- -	- -	- -	- -	- -	- -	- -	- -	- -	- -	- -	- -	- -	- -	- -	
Workhouse School	107	- -	27	—															- - These are girls who are qualified for service, and if they bring a good character from their first place at the end of five years, receive 5 *l.* reward.
Baptists' School, Sunday	- - -	- -	- -	- -	- -	- -	- -	160	- -	- not stated, suppose 32.	—								
Ditto - ditto	- - -	- -	- -	- -	- -	- -	- -	90	- -	60	—								
Primitive Methodists, Sunday	- - -	- -	- -	- -	- -	- -	- -	147	- -	20									
Dissenters Sunday School	- - -	- -	- -	- -	- -	- -	- -	177	- -	52									
Wesleyan Sunday School	- - -	- -	- -	- -	- -	- -	- -	149	- -	20	—								
	697	992	83	141	1,689	224	—	723	—	184	723	184	9	7	1,715	697	2,412	408	

In 1831 the population of the parish was 12,240, let us suppose that 40 per cent. are children from birth to 13 years of age=4,896; if we deduct from this number those children who are too young to be educated, which I presume to be one-third of the whole, we shall have 3,264 of age to receive instruction. The number given above is 2,412, or 73·9 per cent. of that number.

WESTBURY—WILTS.																			
Westbury Town	No Day Schools in connexion with the Established Church; one much wanted.	248	- -	24															
Bratton (Hamlet)		55	- -	none.															
Ditton		70	- -	40															
Infant School		- -	- -	- -	- -	- -	81	- -	30	—									
Chapman Slade Sunday School		- -	- -	- -	- -	- -	- -	61	- -	14	—								
Westbury Baptist School		- -	- -	- -	- -	- -	- -	232	- -	143	- -	- -	- -	- -	- -	- -	- -	- -	- - A lending library of 130 books, gratuitously circulated among the senior children.
Wesleyan Sunday School		- -	- -	- -	- -	- -	- -	37	- -	13	—								
Independent Methodist		- -	- -	- -	- -	- -	- -	54	- -	36	—								
Westbury Leigh		- -	- -	- -	- -	- -	- -	212	- -	125	- -	- -	- -	- -	- -	- -	- -	- -	- - Hymns and spelling-books, published by the Sunday School Union, London.
Independent Upper Meeting		- -	- -	- -	- -	- -	- -	169	- -	43	—								
Bratton		- -	- -	- -	- -	- -	- -	113	- -	none.	—								
Ditto Daily School, recently established (since I left).		- -	- -	- -	- -	- -	76	- -	none.	—									
	—	373	—	64	373	64	157	878	30	374	1,035	404	10	2	1,251	157	1,408	468	

Population of town, 2,495. Return gives 1,408, which is

The population of the above parish is 7,324; suppose 40 per cent. to be children under 13 years of age=2,929; deduct one-third probably too young to receive education, the remainder will be 1,953; the per cent. of the whole. The number of weavers' children is presumed to be 522, of whom the Returns give 468 receiving education, or 89·65 per cent., dame-schools not included.

By the preceding returns of the schools in this parish, for which I am indebted to the kindness of the Rev. Mr. Daniels, the curate, and the different Dissenting ministers, it seems that out of a population of 12,240 in 1831, (perhaps now 14,000,) 2,412 receive some sort of education;* of these 2,412, 408 are stated to be children of hand-loom weavers (several of these, however, come from adjoining parishes). The returns of the numbers attending day schools give 697, all of the Established Church, there is no day school established by the dissenters in this parish. Report from Anthony Austin, Esq., on the South Western Parts of England. Education.

The parish of Road near to, or adjoining Frome, contains three factories, and 11 families of weavers possessing 18 looms; only one factory is at work. The average of the earnings of a single loom is stated to be 4 *s.* 9 ¾ *d.* The children have very little employment, and the amount per head, per week, for food and clothing is 11 ¾ *d.* Road.

I could not ascertain the correctness of this statement, because these people work for several masters, who live at a distance of from four to nine miles in various directions.

Beckington, another adjoining parish, contains 27 families of weavers, and 48 looms. The average earnings of each loom, 4 *s.* 2 ½ *d.* The 27 families contain 50 adults, 27 of whom are males; 21 have wives, 3 are widowers, 5 single; the children amount to 84, of whom 12 are educated at day schools, and 42 at Sunday schools. *See* Tables annexed. Beckington.

* If we suppose the number of children under 13 years old to be 40 per cent. of the whole, we shall have under education 66 per cent. of this number, 33 per cent. being too young.

Sir,

We have sent you the particulars, as near as we can ascertain, respecting the Woollen Weavers in our parish; but as they are the greater part of them in want of further employment, consequently there appears to be great distress amongst them. The item as to their expending their money we could not possibly get.

COUNTY OF SOMERSET.—Beckington.

STATEMENT concerning Families; Income and Expenditure of 27 Families.

Number.	Nature of Fabric Manufactured by Hand-Loom. — Woollen Cloth.	Number in each Family, including Journeymen.	Number of Children. Males.	Number of Children. Females.	Number of Persons Employed in each Family. In Factory.	In Hand-Loom.	In other Occupation.	Total Number Employed.	Number too Young or unable to earn Money.	Average Weekly Income of each Family. From Factory. £. s. d.	From Hand-Loom. £. s. d.	From other Occupation. £. s. d.	Total Amount of Weekly Income.* £. s. d.	Average Number of Working Hours per Day.	Average Weekly Expenditure for Rent, Fuel, and Subsistence. Amount of Rent per Week. £. s. d.	Amount of Rates per Week.	Amount for Candles, Fuel, and Soap, per Week.	Amount per Week for Food and Clothing.	Number of Children that attend Pay Schools.	Free Schools.	Sunday Schools, and also Daily or Pay Schools.	Number of Apprentices to Hand-Loom Weaving.
1	Kerseymere cloth.	10	3	5	–	3	2	5	5	– – –	– – –	– – –	– 15 –	14	– 2 –	–	The overseers could not obtain this	Could not be ascertained.	5	–	5	–
2	Broad cloth -	4	2	1	–	1	2	3	1	– – –	– – –	– – –	– 8 –	12	– 1 6	–						
3	Kerseymere -	4	1	1	–	1	–	1	3	– – –	– – –	– – –	– 5 –	12	– 1 2	–						
4	Ditto - -	6	2	2	–	2	–	2	4	– – –	– – –	– – –	– 8 –	12	– 1 –	–			1	–	1	–
5	Ditto - -	2	–	–	–	1	–	1	1	– – –	– – –	– – –	– 6 –	12	—							
6	Broad cloth -	3	–	1	–	1	1	2	1	– – –	– – –	– – –	– 5 –	12	– 1 –	–			1	–	1	–
7	Kerseymere -	5	1	2	–	3	–	3	2	– – –	– – –	– – –	– 10 –	12	– – –	–			2	–	3	–
8	Ditto - -	5	1	1	–	3	1	4	1	– – –	– – –	– – –	– 16 –	14	– 2 –	–						
9	Ditto - -	1	–	–	–	1	–	1	–	– – –	– – –	– – –	– 4 –	12	– 1 –	–						
10	Ditto - -	8	2	4	–	2	1	3	5	– – –	– – –	– – –	– 10 –	12	– 1 6	–					4	–
11	Broad cloth -	8	3	5	–	2	3	5	3	– – –	– – –	– – –	– 7 –	14	– 1 9	–					3	–
12	Ditto - -	8	2	4	–	2	1	3	5	– – –	– – –	– – –	– 10 –	14	– 1 7	–					2	–
13	Ditto - -	3	–	2	–	2	1	3	–	– – –	– – –	– – –	– 8 –	12	– 2 –	–					2	–
14	Kerseymere -	4	1	1	–	2	2	4	–	– – –	– – –	– – –	– 8 –	12	– 2 –	–					1	–
15	Broad cloth -	4	1	1	–	2	1	3	1	– – –	– – –	– – –	– 10 –	12	– 2 –	–						
16	Ditto - -	5	1	3	–	3	2	5	–	– – –	– – –	– – –	– 15 –	12	– 2 –	–			1	–	1	–
17	Kerseymere -	6	2	2	–	2	2	4	2	– – –	– – –	– – –	– 10 –	14	– 1 4	–					1	–
18	Ditto - -	6	3	1	–	3	1	4	2	– – –	– – –	– – –	– 12 –	14	– 1 6	–					2	–
19	Ditto - -	4	1	2	–	1	3	4	–	– – –	– – –	– – –	– 10 –	14	—							
20	Broad cloth -	3	–	1	–	2	–	2	1	– – –	– 8 –	– – –	– 8 –	14	– 3 – †	–						
21	Ditto - -	7	4	1	–	2	1	3	4	– – –	– – –	– – –	– 12 –	14	– 2 –	–			2	–	4	–
22	Ditto - -	9	5	2	–	1	3	4	5	– – –	– – –	– – –	– 12 –	14	– 1 6	–			2	–	5	–
23	Ditto - -	5	–	3	–	1	3	4	1	– – –	– – –	– – –	– 8 –	16	– 1 6	–			1	–	2	–
24	Ditto - -	2	–	–	–	1	1	2	–	– – –	– – –	– – –	– 7 –	14	– 2 –	–						
25	Ditto - -	2	–	–	–	1	1	2	–	– – –	– – –	– – –	– 6 –	14	– 1 –	–						
26	Ditto - -	4	2	–	–	1	3	4	–	– – –	– – –	– – –	– 8 –	14	– 1 –	–						
27	Ditto - -	6	2	2	–	1	2	3	3	– – –	– – –	– – –	– 8 –	14	– 1 6	–			–	–	3	–
27	Families.	134	39	47	–	47	37	84	50	– – –	– 8 –	– – –	12 6 –	352	1 18 10	–	– –	– –	12	–	42	–
			86					134														
	W. Wilcox, 1 too many children - T. Player, 1 do.	–	2										Deduct wear and tear of 48 looms - - -		2 8 –							
			84												9 18 –							
	Adults - -	50	–	–	27 Families:																	
	Children -	84			21 have wives -			42														
		134			3 are widowers -			3														
					3 single - -			3														
					Journeymen -			2														
								50														

* This total amount of income, as I understood from Mr. Moody, is only from the Loom.

† Has a large garden included in this rent.

Report from Anthony Austin, Esq., on the South Western Parts of England.

Observations on the preceding Table.

27 Families contain 132 persons, or 4·88 in each family.

47 Persons, employed in hand-looms, earn 4 *s.* 2 ½ *d.* each.

The earnings from other occupations not put down, so cannot reckon the income of each family.

Number of persons in these families unemployed, 50 out of 134, or 37 ⅓ per cent.

Total number of children 84, of whom 54 appear to be educated. Of these 54, 12 receive an education beyond merely learning to read.

42 learn only to read and say some religious catechism.

This last may not be correct, for it happens that children who have, when too young to work, gone to a daily school (on the National system, perhaps,) do, when put to work, continue to receive instruction by attending a Sunday school.

Those persons living in villages have most of them small gardens included in the charge for rent, and these come in aid of their maintenance. It is clear that the average of the earnings at the loom could not keep them from starving.

Number earning from 1 *s.* to 3 *s.* per week is - none.
— 3 *s.* to 4 *s.* - - - 17
— 4 *s.* to 5 *s.* - - - 16
— 5 *s.* to 7 *s.* - - - 8
— 7 *s.* to 9 *s.* - - - 4
— 9 *s.* to 12 *s.* - - - 2

COUNTY OF SOMERSET.—Road.

STATEMENT concerning Families; Income and Expenditure of Eleven Families.

Number.	Nature of Fabric Manufactured by Hand-Loom.	Number in each Family, including Journeymen.	Number of Children. Males.	Number of Children. Females.	Number of Persons Employed in each Family. In Factory.	In Hand-Loom.	In other Occupation.	Total Number Employed.	Number too Young or unable to earn Money.	Average Weekly Income of each Family. From Factory.	From Hand-Loom.	From other Occupation.	Total Amount of Gross Weekly Income.	Average Number of Working Hours per Week.	Average Weekly Expenditure for Rent, Fuel, and Subsistence. Amount of Rent per Week.	Amount of Rates per Week.	Amount for Candles, Fuel, and Soap, per Week.	Amount per Week for Food and Clothing.	Number of Children that Attend. Pay Schools.	Free Schools.	Sunday Schools.	Number of Apprentices to Hand-Loom Weaving.
										£. s. d.	£. s. d.	s. d.	£. s. d.		s. d.		s. d.	£. s. d.	s. d.			
1	1 Narrow and 1 Broad.	6	1	3	–	2	–	–	3	– –	– 7 –	– –	– 7 –	84	2 –	–	1 –	– 4 –	–	–	4	—
2	3 Narrow -	–	3	–	–	3	–	–	2	– –	– 15 –	– –	– 15 –	each 108	2 –	–	2 –	– – 11	– 3	–	2	—
3	1 Broad -	2	–	–	–	1	–	–	–	– –	– 5 –	– –	– 5 –	48	1 –	–	1 –	– 3 –	—			
4	3 Narrow -	8	2	4	–	2 and a journeyman working.			2	– –	– 12 –	– –	– 12 –	each 82	2 –	–	2 –	– 8 –	2 1½	–	5	—
5	1 Broad -	2	–	–	–	1	1	–	–	– –	– 4 –	4 –	– 8 –	80	2 –	–	1 6	– 4 6	—			
6	Ditto - -	4	2	–	–	1	1	–	2	– –	– 4 9	1 3	– 6 –	84	1 –	–	– 4	– 1 4	1 –	–	2	—
7	Ditto - - Two looms; one only employed at a time for want of work.	5	1	2	–	1	1	–	2	– –	– 7 –	– 10	– 7 10	80	1 6	–	– 9	– 4 9	1 2	–	all 3	—
8	3 Narrow -	10	5	5	–	3	–	–	–	– –	– 12 –	– –	– 12 –	80	2 –	–	1 –	– 9 –	–	–	2	—
9	2 ditto - -	10	6	4	–	2	–	–	5	– –	– 9 –	– –	– 9 –	78	1 9	–	1 4	– 5 11	—			
10	1 Broad -	9	7	2	–	1	–	–	3	– –	– 6 –	– –	– 6 –	80	2 –	–	– 9	– 3 3	3 6	–	5	—
11	Ditto - -	2	1	1	–	1	–	–	1	– –	– 5 –	– –	– 5 –	84	2 6	–	– 9	– 2 9	–	–	2	—
11	Families.	58	28	21	–	18	3	–	18	– –	4 6 9	6 1	4 12 10	–	19 9	–	12 5	2 17 6	9 –	–	25	—
			49																			

11 Families, 49 children, or 4·45 to each family.
Average weekly earnings of each family, at all occupations, 8 *s.* 5 *d.*, the highest being 12 *s.*, and the lowest 5 *s.*
18 persons employed in hand-looms earn 4 *s.* 9 ¾·33 *d.* per week for each person.
58 persons in family have for all expenses 1 *s.* 6 ¾ *d.* per head per week.
— Ditto, for food and clothing - - - 11 ¾·6 *d.* —

These two are doubtful, because the daily scholars go also to Sunday schools - - - - - Out of 49 children - - 34 are educated, or - - - - - - 69·4 per cent.
Ditto - - - - - 25 learn to read only, and say some religious catechism 51 —
Ditto - - - - - 9 learn to read and write - - - - - 18·36 —

Eighteen persons in hand-looms, of whom none earn from - - - - - - - 1 *s.* to 3 *s.* per week.
6 earn from - - - - - - - 3 *s.* to 4 *s.* —
8 earn from - - - - - - - 4 *s.* to 5 *s.* —
4 earn from - - - - - - - 5 *s.* to 7 *s.* —
none - - - - - - - - 7 *s.* to 9 *s.* —

Heytesbury.

At Heytesbury, eight power-looms are employed and * * * hand-looms in the same factory; the actual amount earned by the former, 10 *s.* 8 ¾ *d.* a week for each individual, and at the latter 10 *s.*, as given by the manufacturers' books. The weavers own return gives an average of 7 *s.* 6 ½ *d.* The average of the amount paid weekly to those weavers who work at their own homes is less, but as these work for other masters, their actual income is not to be ascertained.

Westbury

Report from Anthony Austin, Esq., on the South Western Parts of England.

Westbury and Trowbridge. Wages.

Westbury and Trowbridge are the places where the narrow sorts of woollens are made; viz., cassimeres, fancy kerseys, tweeds, &c. &c. The number of looms in the Trowbridge district is stated by the weavers to be (as ascertained by them from an inquiry instituted for the purpose of this commission) 1,623, of which 695, or nearly 43 per cent., were standing without chains in them on the day they sent round.

The wages would give to an average workman, under 45 years of age (on all sorts of work), 12 *s.* a week; deduct 43 per cent. for the time unemployed, which is nearly equal to 5 *s.* 2 *d.*, the actual earnings of each loom will be 6 *s.* 10 *d.* per week.

The quantity of employment is not equally divided, some have sufficient to earn 13 *s.* a week, others not more than 4 *s.*

From the statement given by the weavers themselves, it would appear that the average sum obtained for the produce of a single loom, owing to deficiency of work, not lowness of wages, is not more than 3 *s.* 6 ½ *d.* per week (*see* Statement annexed). The highest amount given in this Return is 8 *s.* (the manufacturer's Return would give an average of 8 *s.* 2 *d.*) The sum left after deducting rent, fuel, soap and candles, is 1 *s.* 2 *d.* per week for each individual.

From the parish of Hilperton, which forms a part of this district, I have a return of the earnings of 36 families, giving 4 *s.* 6 ½ *d.* for each loom per week, the highest being 8 *s.*

COUNTY OF WILTS.—Trowbridge.

STATEMENT concerning Families; Income and Expenditure of 37 Families.

Number.	Nature of Fabric Manufactured by Hand-loom.	Number in each Family.	Number of Children. Males.	Number of Children. Females.	Number of Persons Employed in each Family. In Factory.	In Hand-Loom.	In other Occupation.	Total Number Employed.	Number too Young or unable to earn Money.	Average Weekly Income of each Family. From Factory. £. s. d.	From Hand-Loom. £. s. d.	From other Occupation. £. s. d.	Total Amount of Weekly Income. £. s. d.	Average Number of Working Hours per Week.	Average Weekly Expenditure for Rent, Fuel, and Subsistence. Amount of Rent per Week. £. s. d.	Amount of Rates per Week. s. d.	Amount for Candles, Fuel, and Soap, per Week. £. s. d.	Amount per Week for Food and Clothing. £. s. d.	Number of Children that attend Pay Schools.	Free Schools.	Sunday Schools.	Number of Apprentices to Hand-Loom Weaving.
1	Narrow Looms	5	–	3	–	2	–	2	3	– – –	– 10 –	– – –	– 10 –		– 2 –	– 2	– 2 –	– 5 10	—			
2	Ditto	6	3	1	–	1	–	1	5	– – –	– 7 –	– – –	– 7 –		– 2 –	– –	– 1 6	– 3 6	—			
3	Ditto	5	2	1	–	1	–	1	4	– – –	– 8 –	– – –	– 8 –		– 1 3	– –	– 1 6	– 5 3	—	–	3	
4	Ditto	4	2	–	–	2	–	2	2	– – –	– 6 –	– – –	– 6 –		– 1 6	– –	– 1 –	– 3 6	—			
5	Ditto	3	–	1	–	2	1	3	–	– – –	– 7 –	– 1 –	– 8 –		– 1 9	– 1	– 1 6	– 4 8	–	–	1	
6	Ditto	6	2	2	–	2	–	2	4	– – –	– 8 –	– – –	– 8 –		– 2 6	– 2	– 1 6	– 3 10	–	–	3	
7	Ditto	6	–	4	–	1	–	1	5	– – –	– 8 –	– – –	– 8 –		– 1 6	–	– 1 6	– 5 –	–	–	1	
8	Ditto	8	3	3	–	3	1	4	4	– – –	– 14 –	– 1 –	– 15 –		– 2 6	– 3	– 2 –	– 10 3	–	–	3	
9	Ditto	6	2	2	–	2	–	2	4	– – –	– 10 –	– – –	– 10 –		none.	– 3	– 2 –	– 7 9	–	–	4	
10	Ditto	3	–	1	–	1	1	2	1	– – –	– 4 –	– 4 –	– 8 –		– 1 9	–	– 1 6	– 4 9	—			
11	Ditto	3	1	–	–	1	1	2	1	– – –	– 4 –	– 6 –	– 10 –		– 1 6	–	– 1 6	– 7 –	—			
12	Ditto	4	–	2	–	2	–	2	2	– – –	– 5 6	– – –	– 5 6		– 1 6	–	– 1 –	– 3 –	—			
13	Ditto	2	–	–	–	1	–	1	1	– – –	– 4 –	– – –	– 4 –		– 2 –	–	– 1 –	– 1 –	—			
14	Ditto	6	4	–	–	1	1	2	4	– – –	– 4 –	– 5 –	– 9 –		– 1 9	–	– 2 –	– 5 3	–	–	2	
15	Ditto	4	1	1	–	2	–	2	2	– – –	– 12 –	– – –	– 12 –		– 2 3	–	– 2 6	– 7 3	—			
16	Ditto	2	–	–	–	2	–	2	–	– – –	– 8 –	– – –	– 8 –		– 1 6	–	– 2 –	– 4 6	—			
17	Ditto	4	2	1	–	2	–	2	2	– – –	– 7 –	– – –	– 7 –		– 1 –	–	– 2 –	– 4 –	—			
18	Ditto	6	2	2	–	2	–	2	4	– – –	– 11 –	– – –	– 11 –		– 1 3	– 2	– 2 6	– 7 1	—			
19	Ditto	4	2	–	–	2	–	2	2	– – –	– 10 –	– – –	– 10 –		– 1 3	– 2	– 2 6	– 6 1	—			
20	Ditto	3	1	–	–	1	1	2	1	– – –	– 3 –	– 6 –	– 9 –		– 1 3	– 2	– 2 –	– 5 7	—			
21	Ditto	7	2	3	–	1	2	3	4	– – –	– 5 –	– 5 6	– 10 6	84 hours per week	– 1 –	–	– 2 6	– 7 –	–	–	4	
22	Ditto	7	3	2	2	2	–	4	3	– 2 –	– 8 –	– – –	– 10 –		– 2 –	– 2	– 2 6	– 5 4	–	–	3	
23	Ditto	5	–	3	1	2	–	3	2	– 1 –	– 10 –	– – –	– 11 –		– 1 6	– 2	– 2 6	– 6 10	—			
24	Ditto	9	2	5	1	3	–	4	5	– 1 6	– 10 –	– – –	– 11 6		– 2 –	– 4	– 2 6	– 6 8	–	–	4	
25	Ditto	2	–	–	–	1	1	2	–	– – –	– 2 –	– 9 –	– 11 –		– 2 –	–	– 2 –	– 7 –	—			
26	Ditto	10	5	3	–	5	–	5	5	– – –	– 25 –	– – –	– 25 –		–	– 1	– 3 6	1 – –	–	–	3	
27	Ditto	8	3	3	1	5	–	6	2	– 1 6	– 16 –	– – –	– 17 6		– 2 6	– 6	– 3 6	– 11 –	–	–	2	
28	Ditto	10	5	3	1	3	–	4	6	– 2 –	– 15 –	– – –	– 17 –		– 2 8	– 6	– 3 –	– 10 10	–	–	6	
29	Ditto	5	3	–	–	5	–	5	–	– – –	– 20 –	– – –	– 20 –		– 2 8	– 6	– 3 –	– 13 10	—			
30	Ditto	5	2	1	–	1	1	2	3	– – –	– 4 –	– 5 –	– 9 –		– 1 3	– 2	– 2 6	– 5 1	–	–	1	
31	Ditto	5	2	2	–	2	3	5	–	– – –	– 5 –	– 4 6	– 9 6		– 1 9	– 2	– 2 –	– 5 7	–	–	3	
32	Ditto	3	2	–	–	1	–	1	2	– – –	– 8 –	– – –	– 8 –		– 2 –	–	– 2 –	– 4 –	—			
33	Ditto	7	1	4	–	2	5	7	–	– – –	– 8 –	– 5 –	– 13 –		– 2 –	–	– 2 6	– 8 6	–	2	3	
34	Ditto	6	2	2	–	2	–	2	4	– – –	– 8 –	– – –	– 8 –		– 2 6	–	– 2 –	– 3 6	–	–	3	
35	Ditto	6	2	2	–	3	1	4	2	– 1 –	– 15 –	– – –	– 16 –		– 2 6	– 6	– 3 –	– 10 –	—			
36	Ditto	5	1	2	–	2	–	2	3	– – –	– 14 –	– – –	– 14 –		– 2 –	– 3	– 2 6	– 9 3	–	–	2	
37	Ditto	8	3	3	–	4	2	6	2	– – –	– 10 –	– 10 –	– 20 –		– 2 6	– 3	– 3 –	– 14 3	–	–	2	
37	Families.	198	65	62	6	77	21	104	94	– 9 –	16 13 6	3 2 –	20 4 6	84	3 4 10	5 11	3 19 6	12 14 3	–	–	53	
	Persons	–	–	127																		

This statement was given me by each weaver separately, and I believe the same to be true.

(signed) *John Sims.*

Report from Anthony Austin, Esq., on the South Western Parts of England.

Observations on the foregoing Table.

37 Families, 77 looms, or looms to a family - - - - 2·08
Ditto - 127 children, or children to a family - - - 2·89
Ditto - 198 persons, or persons to a family - - - 5·34

Of these 37 families, it appears that 34 are married people.
3 are widows or widowers.
34 have children.
3 have no children.

198 Persons earn weekly 20 *l.* 4 *s.* 6 *d.*, or for each person - - - 1 *s.* 10½ *d.* per week.
deducting rent - - - - - 1 *s.* 6¾·3 *d.* —
deducting rent, rates, soap, lights, and fire 1 *s.* 2·2 *d.* —

77 Looms earn 16 *l.* 13 *s.* 6 *d.*, or per loom per week, 3 *s.* 6½ *d.*

As there are two looms to a family on the average, each family earns 7 *s.* 1 *d.* by weaving.

Of the above 77, one loom earns from 1 *s.* to 2 *s.* per week, say 1 loom.
2 *s.* to 3 *s.* - — - 11 —
3 *s.* to 4 *s.* - — - 33 —
4 *s.* to 5 *s.* - — - 23 —
5 *s.* to 6 *s.* - — - 4 —
6 *s.* to 7 *s.* - — - 3 —
7 *s.* to 8 *s.* - — - 2 —
None higher. —
Total - - - 77

Averaging 3 *s.* 6½ *d.* as above.

County of Wilts.—Hilperton and The Marsh.

STATEMENT concerning Families; Income and Expenditure of 36 Families, whose Houses were visited for the purpose of this Inquiry.

Number.	Nature of Fabric Manufactured by Hand-Loom.	Number in each Family.	Number of Children.		Number of Persons Employed in each Family.				Average Weekly Income of each Family.				Average Number of Working Hours per Week.	Average Weekly Expenditure for Rent, Fuel, and Subsistence.				Number of Children that attend			Number of Apprentices to Hand-Loom Weaving.
			Males.	Females.	In Factory.	In Hand-Loom.	In other Occupation.	Total Number Employed.	From Factory.	From Hand-Loom.	From other Occupation.	Total Amount of Weekly Income.		Amount of Rent per Week.	Amount of Rates per Week.	Amount for Candles, Fuel, and Soap, per Week.	Amount per Week for Food and Clothing.	Pay Schools.	Free Schools.	Sunday Schools.	
									£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.		£. s. d.	s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.				
1	Cassimere -	7	1	4	—	1	2	3	4	— —	— 2 —	— 10 —	— 12 —	—	— 1 9	—	— 2 6	— 7 9	—	—	4	—
2	Ditto - -	3	—	1	—	1	1	2	1	— —	— 2 6	— 6 —	— 8 6	—	— 1 6	—	— 2 —	— 5 —				
3	Ditto - -	2	—	—	—	2	—	2	—	— —	— 12 —	— —	— 12 —	—	— 2 —	— 4	— 2 —	— 7 8				
4	Ditto - -	6	2	2	—	3	—	3	3	— —	— 12 —	— —	— 12 —	—	— 2 6	— 5	— 2 6	— 6 7	—	—	2	—
5	Ditto - -	5	—	3	—	5	—	5	—	— —	— 14 —	— —	— 14 —	—	— 2 —	— 4	— 2 6	— 9 2	—	—	3	—
6	Ditto - -	7	3	2	—	3	—	3	4	— —	— 15 —	— —	— 15 —	—	— 1 9	— 2	— 2 6	— 10 7	—	—	4	—
7	Ditto - -	2	—	—	—	1	1	2	—	— —	— 3 —	— 5 —	— 8 —	—	— 2 —	—	— 1 6	— 4 6				
8	Ditto - -	2	—	—	—	2	—	2	—	— —	— 10 —	— —	— 10 —	—	— 2 6	— 3	— 2 —	— 5 3				
9	Ditto - -	11	4	5	—	2	3	5	6	— —	— 16 —	— 2 —	— 18 —	—	— 2 6	— 4	— 2 6	— 12 8	—	—	5	—
10	Ditto - -	4	—	2	—	2	—	2	2	— —	— 10 —	— —	— 10 —	—	— 2 —	—	— 4 —	— 4 —				
11	Ditto - -	6	3	1	—	2	—	2	4	— —	— 7 —	— —	— 7 —	—	— 1 6	—	— 2 —	— 3 6				
12	Ditto - -	7	3	2	1	1	1	3	4	— 1 6	— 2 —	— 9 —	— 12 6	—	— 1 6	—	— 2 6	— 8 6	—	—	4	—
13	Ditto - -	2	—	—	—	2	—	2	—	— —	— 10 —	— —	— 10 —	—	— 2 —	—	— 2 —	— 6 —				
14	Ditto - -	4	1	1	—	2	—	2	2	— —	— 8 —	— —	— 8 —	—	— 2 —	—	— 2 —	— 4 —	—	—	—	1
15	Ditto - -	5	1	3	—	1	2	3	2	— —	— 6 —	— 2 —	— 8 —	—	— 2 6	—	— 1 6	— 4 —	—	—	4	—
16	Ditto - -	3	1	—	—	2	—	2	1	— —	— 6 —	— —	— 6 —	—	— 1 3	—	— 1 3	— 3 6				
17	Ditto - -	8	3	3	—	1	1	2	4	— —	— 8 —	— 3 6	— 11 6	—	— 2 6	—	— 2 —	— 6 6	—	—	2	—
18	Ditto - -	3	1	—	—	2	1	3	—	— —	— 7 —	— 2 6	— 9 6	—	— 1 6	—	— 2 —	— 5 6				
19	Ditto - -	6	2	2	—	1	1	2	4	— —	— 7 —	— 1 —	— 8 —	—	— 1 6	—	— 2 —	— 4 6	—	—	2	—
20	Ditto - -	6	2	1	—	2	2	4	2	— —	— 7 —	— 2 —	— 9 —	—	— 2 4	—	— 1 6	— 5 2				
21	Ditto - -	9	3	4	—	1	2	3	6	— —	— 5 —	— 2 9	— 7 9	—	— 2 6	—	— 2 —	— 3 3	—	—	2	—
22	Ditto - -	6	1	3	—	1	—	1	5	— —	— 7 —	— —	— 7 —	—	— 2 —	—	— 2 —	— 3 —	—	—	2	—
23	Ditto - -	3	1	—	—	2	—	2	1	— —	— 7 —	— —	— 7 —	—	— 2 —	— 2	— 2 —	— 2 10				
24	Ditto - -	4	—	2	—	2	—	2	2	— —	— 8 —	— —	— 8 —	—	— 2 —	— 3	— 2 6	— 3 3	—	—	2	—
25	Ditto - -	2	—	—	—	2	—	2	—	— —	— 7 —	— —	— 7 —	—	— 2 —	— 2	— 1 6	— 3 4				
26	Ditto - -	8	4	2	—	3	—	3	5	— —	— 15 —	— —	— 15 —	—	— 3 —	—	— 2 —	— 10 —				
27	Ditto - -	6	3	1	—	2	—	2	4	— —	— 10 —	— —	— 10 —	—	— 2 —	— 2	— 2 —	— 5 10				
28	Ditto - -	2	—	—	—	2	—	2	—	— —	— 10 —	— —	— 10 —	—	— 4 —	—	— 2 —	— 4 —				
29	Ditto - -	4	2	—	—	1	1	2	2	— —	— 2 —	— 8 —	— 10 —	—	— 2 —	—	— 2 6	— 5 6				
30	Ditto - -	2	—	—	—	2	—	2	—	— —	— 10 —	— —	— 10 —	—	— 2 3	—	— 2 —	— 5 9				
31	Ditto - -	5	3	—	—	1	1	2	3	— —	— 2 6	— 8 —	— 10 6	—	— 1 9	—	— 2 —	— 6 9				
32	Ditto - -	9	4	3	—	1	3	4	5	— —	— 8 —	— 13 —	1 1 —	—	— 2 —	— 3	— 2 6	— 16 3	—	—	5	—
33	Ditto - -	5	2	1	—	2	—	2	3	— —	— 11 —	— —	— 11 —	—	— 2 9	—	— 2 6	— 5 9				
34	Ditto - -	2	—	—	—	1	—	1	1	— —	— 8 —	— —	— 8 —	—	— 2 —	—	— 1 6	— 4 6				
35	Ditto - -	9	3	4	—	2	1	3	6	— —	— 10 —	— 1 —	— 11 —	—	— 2 —	—	— 2 —	— 7 —	—	—	4	—
36	Ditto - -	6	2	2	—	2	1	3	3	— —	— 10 —	— 3 6	— 13 6	—	— 2 6	— 3	— 2 6	— 8 3	—	—	4	—
36	Families.	181	55	54	1	65	24	90	91	— 1 6	14 15 —	3 19 3	18 15 9	—	3 16 10	3 1	3 16 3	10 19 7	none	none	49	none
			109																			

OBSERVATIONS ON PRECEDING TABLE.

Report from Anthony Austin, Esq., on the South Western Parts of England.

36 Families, 181 persons, or 5·03 to a family.

36 Families, 109 children, or 3·03 to a family.

Average weekly earnings of each family, at all occupations, 10*s.* 11*d.*; the highest being 15*s.*, and the lowest 7*s.*

65 Persons employed at hand-looms earn 14*l.* 15*s.*, or 4*s.* 6½*d.* for each loom per week.

181 Persons, at all occupations, earn 18*l.* 15*s.* 9*d.*, or 2*s.* 0¾*d.* for each person per week.

Number of children, stated to be 109, of whom 49 are educated, or 45 per cent. nearly.

Number of persons unemployed in a family rather exceeds 50 per cent.

Of these 36 families, 35 are married couples.

1 a widow or widower, with children.

Of the 65 persons employed in hand-looms,

13	earn from	1*s.* to 3*s.*	per week.	2	earn from	6*s.* to 7*s.*	per week.
17	—	3*s.* to 4*s.*	—	5	—	7*s.* to 9*s.*	—
23	—	4*s.* to 5*s.*	—	none	—	9*s.* to 11*s.*	—
5	—	5*s.* to 6*s.*	—	none earn above 11*s.*			

The sum of the income after paying rent, &c. is 10*l.* 19*s.* 7*d.*, which, being divided by the total number of persons, gives 1*s.* 2½*d.* per week for each individual to provide food and clothing.

Employment at other occupations.

It will be observed, that the number of persons belonging to the families of these weavers (generally children) employed in the factories in Trowbridge, which is a town containing several considerable establishments for the manufacture of cloths and cassimeres (perhaps 20), is only six, or three per cent., and at other occupations 21 persons: these other occupations are generally washing and needle-work for the women, what is called "odd jobs;" occasional work, as errand boys, stable boys, &c., for the men and boys. One man (No. 25, p. 425) appears to be an agricultural labourer, 9*s.* a week.

In the Hilperton return we have only one person employed in the factories, and 24 at other occupations, out of a total of 181. This place is situated a mile from Trowbridge, has no factory in it, and is surrounded by a considerable agricultural district.

The return of the manufacturers gives an average of 8*s.* 2*d.** for each loom.

Evidence of a relieving officer.

Agricultural labourers compared with hand-loom weavers.

At Westbury the same sort of manufacture is carried on by five considerable houses; the parish is very extensive and contains several villages.

1. Ditton's Marsh is almost entirely inhabited by weavers; 2. Bratton, on the contrary, by agricultural labourers. The evidence regarding the comparative condition of these two classes is very contradictory, as the following extracts from the evidence will show. One of the relieving officers of the parish states, "I go round the parish every week; one part of the parish has only agricultural labourers in it. There I find every thing clean and neat, and part of a bag of flour in almost every cottage. The wages of the agricultural labourer are just raised; they get now (about 25 August 1838) from 8*s.* to 10*s.* a week.† In the weavers' cottages the management is very different; they are bad managers; even where two or three of the same family have work on two or three looms, I have found them badly off,‡ and the cottage dirty. So eager are the weavers for work, that I have known instances of the wife working by day, and the husband by night to get the work done quickly, but when they have work they are not provident. At most of the villages the weavers have with their houses about five perches of garden-ground, which in its produce is worth 10*s.* a year perhaps [about 2¼*d.* a week]. When they bring in their work the weavers are apt to drink, and every day that they look out for work they get together and drink; if they have no money they are trusted, if it is known that they are in employment. I have heard, and I believe it, that when

* This is an average deduced by me from the statements of the different manufacturers.

† The same observations are made by a gentleman at Collumpton, who was the medical practitioner employed by the guardians of the poor of that union.

‡ They may have been previously without work, many for weeks, and be now paying their debts.—*A. A.*

Report from Anthony Austin, Esq., on the South Western Parts of England.

when work is plenty the weavers in The Marsh run in debt more than when they earn less, for the females then spend so much in finery that it runs away with a great deal of their money. And the young men dress smart; they seem to think of nothing but drinking and sweethearting; they marry very early. I know two instances of young men married at 16, and in one, of the wife having a child before either she or her husband was 17 years old. I do not know any reason why weavers should be less provident than other work-people, but it always was so in this parish. They dress very badly on week days, but on Sunday some of the young men dress very gaily, have watches, &c. &c. When work is plenty they will not touch a shuttle for a week, at the time of the fair; there are three fairs in a year." The remaining part of this person's evidence relates to beer-shops; but I will insert it here as an appendage to the preceding information, concerning the affairs of this particular parish.

Beer-shops.

"There are two public-houses and one beer-shop; there were more beer-shops when first the law allowed them, but many are now given up; the work-people prefer the regular public-houses [licensed victuallers] to the beer-shops; the former sell beer of their own brewing; many of the latter dealt in brewer's beer. Beer-shops which sell home-brewed beer have tolerable custom. As far as my knowledge extends, the disturbances which have arisen in the parish have been concocted in the beer-shops. The worst of characters go to the beer-shops; for instance, poachers would have their calling more easily detected if they frequented public-houses, than by going to a beer-shop."

The inference to be drawn from this is clearly, that the conduct of the weavers, even when they take their beer, is not such as to require the concealment of the beer-shop; for they are said *to prefer the regular public-houses.*

On the other hand, I have the evidence of a dissenting minister residing in the agricultural part of the parish.

"The condition, wages, and circumstances of hand-loom weavers in the neighbourhood are far more comfortable and superior to those of the agricultural classes."

Another dissenting minister writes as follows:

"Respecting the moral and pecuniary condition of the hand-loom weavers, I should say, generally, it is bad; and so is that of the labourers in husbandry, owing to the extent of the population, shortness of employment, dearness of all kinds of provisions, and wages. There is evidently a prevailing spirit of discontent in the lower orders of the people.

"*P. S.* We have a trade's union, night meetings, itinerant leaders from Glasgow, &c. &c. &c." The date of this is the 18th December 1838."

The curate states, "That the weavers are a well-behaved, moral set of men; the population of the parish are generally so."

The conclusion to be drawn from the preceding evidence is, that from the uncertainty of the amount of income of the weavers, they are subject to greater suffering by the reverses of fortune, than if they depended, like the agriculturist, on a fixed amount of wages. The number of weavers is about 150. My return from 38 families gives 5 *s.* 1 ½ *d.* as the average of each loom's earnings; by the masters' account, 10 *s.* 1 *d.* *

Early marriages.

The early marriages mentioned in the quotation from the evidence of the relieving officer are in some measure confirmed by a weaver, whose testimony runs thus: "I am married; married at 25." "Why did you marry so early in life?"—In reply to this question, the witness said that he was compelled to do so by the consequences of "company-keeping," as it is called. He added, that this was a thing of frequent occurrence; company-keeping was the custom of the place, and the result was, generally, a marriage.

Education.

The account of the schools in this parish is given at page 422. At the time I was there, the only daily school was an infant school, established by the Wesleyans.† Since that time the dissenters have originated one at Bratton (the agriculturists' village), which contains 76 children, but not one child of a hand-loom weaver attends it.

At the Wesleyan Infant School - 30 hand-loom weavers' children attend.
At the Church Sunday Schools - 64 - do. - do.
At the Dissenters' Sunday Schools - 374. Better means of education are sadly wanted in this parish.

* The return from Trowbridge manufacturers gives 8 *s.* 2 *d.*; supposing the quantity of work put out at Trowbridge is to that of Westbury as three to two; the average of the two places will be 8 *s.* 11 *d.*

† The British daily school was closed, being at the time unprovided with a master.

COUNTY OF WILTS.—Westbury.

STATEMENT concerning Families; Income and Expenditure of 38 Families, whose Houses were visited for the purpose of this Inquiry.

Number.	Nature of Fabric Manufactured by Hand-Loom.	Number in each Family.	Number of Children.		Number of Persons Employed in each Family.				Number too Young or unable to earn Money.	Average Weekly Income of each Family.				Average Number of Working Hours per Week.	Average Weekly Expenditure for Rent, Fuel, and Subsistence.				Number of Children that attend			Number of Apprentices to Hand-Loom Weaving.
			Males.	Females.	In Factory.	In Hand-Loom.	In other Occupation.	Total Number Employed.		From Factory.	From Hand-Loom.	From other Occupation.	Total Amount of Weekly Income.		Amount of Rent per Week.	Amount of Rates per Week.	Amount for Candles, Fuel, and Soap, per Week.	Amount per Week for Food and Clothing.	Pay Schools.	Free Schools.	Sunday Schools.	
										£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.		£. s. d.	d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.				
1	Cassimere -	9	5	2	–	1	2	3	6	– – –	– 7 –	– 12 –	– 19 –	–	– 2 –	–	– 2 6	– 14 6	–	–	4	–
2	Ditto - -	4	1	1	–	1	–	1	3	– – –	– 7 –	– – –	– 7 –	–	– 2 –	3	– 2 –	– 2 9	–			
3	Ditto - -	2	–	–	–	1	–	1	1	– – –	– 5 –	– – –	– 5 –	–	none.	6	– 1 6	– 3 –				
4	Ditto - -	2	–	–	–	2	–	2	–	– – –	– 9 –	– – –	– 9 –	–	– 2 –	2	– 2 –	– 4 10				
5	Ditto - -	4	1	1	–	2	–	2	2	– – –	– 10 –	– – –	– 10 –	–	– 2 –	2	– 2 3	– 5 7				
6	Ditto - -	6	4	1	1	1	–	2	4	– 2 –	– 6 –	– – –	– 8 –	–	– 1 9	–	– 2 3	– 4 –	–	–	5	–
7	Ditto - -	5	1	2	–	2	1	3	2	– – –	– 9 –	– 1 –	– 10 –	–	– 1 9	2	– 2 –	– 6 1	–	–	3	–
8	Ditto - -	2	–	–	–	1	–	1	1	– – –	– 9 –	– – –	– 9 –	–	– 1 9	2	– 2 –	– 5 1	–			
9	Ditto - -	5	2	1	–	2	–	2	3	– – –	– 10 –	– – –	– 10 –	–	– 1 9	2	– 2 –	– 6 1	–	–	1	–
10	Ditto - -	2	–	–	–	1	–	1	1	– – –	– 5 –	– – –	– 5 –	–	– 1 6	–	– 1 –	– 2 6				
11	Ditto - -	6	1	4	–	1	1	2	4	– – –	– 6 –	– 1 6	– 7 6	–	– 1 6	–	– 2 –	– 4 –				
12	Ditto - -	3	–	1	–	2	–	2	1	– – –	– 10 –	– – –	– 10 –	–	– 1 6	2	– 2 –	– 6 4				
13	Ditto - -	5	1	2	–	2	–	2	3	– – –	– 9 –	– – –	– 9 –	–	– 1 6	2	– 2 –	– 5 4	–	–	1	
14	Ditto - -	5	2	1	–	2	–	2	3	– – –	– 8 –	– – –	– 8 –	–	– 1 9	–	– 2 –	– 4 3	–	–	1	
15	Ditto - -	7	3	2	–	2	–	2	5	– – –	– 10 –	– – –	– 10 –	–	– 1 6	2	– 2 –	– 6 4	–	–	3	
16	Ditto - -	4	2	–	–	2	1	3	1	– – –	– 12 –	– 1 –	– 13 –	–	– 2 3	3	– 2 6	– 8 –	–	–	2	
17	Ditto - -	4	3	–	–	1	1	2	2	– – –	– 5 –	– 1 –	– 6 –	–	– 1 6	–	– 1 6	– 3 –	–	–	2	
18	Ditto - -	2	–	1	–	1	–	1	1	– – –	– 5 –	– – –	– 5 –	–	– 1 –	–	– 1 6	– 2 6				
19	Ditto - -	11	4	5	–	2	2	4	7	– – –	– 10 –	– 4 –	– 14 –	–	– 1 6	2	– 2 6	– 9 10	–	–	6	
20	Ditto - -	3	1	–	–	2	1	3	–	– – –	– 9 –	– 1 –	– 10 –	–	– 2 –	–	– 2 –	– 6 –	–	–	1	
21	Ditto - -	5	2	2	–	2	–	2	3	– – –	– 10 –	– – –	– 10 –	–	– 2 –	–	– 1 9	– 6 3	–	–	4	
22	Ditto - -	6	1	3	–	2	1	3	3	– – –	– 10 –	– – 9	– 10 9	–	– 2 –	2	– 2 –	– 6 7				
23	Ditto - -	4	3	–	–	1	2	3	1	– – –	– 6 –	– 2 –	– 8 –	–	– 1 –	–	– 2 –	– 5 –	–	–	3	
24	Ditto - -	3	1	1	–	1	–	1	2	– – –	– 5 –	– – –	– 5 –	–	– 1 6	–	– 1 6	– 2 –	–	–	1	
25	Ditto - -	2	–	–	–	2	–	2	–	– – –	– 8 –	– – –	– 8 –	–	– 2 –	–	– 2 –	– 4 –				
26	Ditto - -	2	–	–	–	2	–	2	–	– – –	– 10 –	– – –	– 10 –	–	– 2 –	–	– 2 –	– 6 –				
27	Ditto - -	2	–	–	–	1	–	1	1	– – –	– 5 –	– – –	– 5 –	–	– 2 –	–	– 1 –	– 2 –				
28	Ditto - -	9	3	4	–	1	1	2	7	– – –	– 8 –	– 1 –	– 9 –	–	– 2 –	–	– 1 6	– 5 6	–	–	5	
29	Ditto - -	5	1	2	–	1	–	1	4	– – –	– 7 –	– – –	– 7 –	–	– 1 6	1	– 1 6	– 3 11	–	–	1	
30	Ditto - -	8	3	3	–	2	1	3	5	– – –	– 12 –	– 3 6	– 15 6	–	– 1 –	2	– 2 6	– 11 10	–	–	3	
31	Ditto - -	10	4	4	–	3	–	3	7	– – –	– 16 –	– – –	– 16 –	–	– 2 6	2	– 2 6	– 10 10	–	–	2	
32	Ditto - -	7	3	2	–	1	2	3	4	– – –	– 8 –	– 3 –	– 11 –	–	– – 10	–	– 2 6	– 7 8	–	–	2	
33	Ditto - -	5	1	2	–	2	2	4	1	– – –	– 5 –	– 2 6	– 7 6	–	– 1 4	–	– 1 8	– 4 6	–	–	2	
34	Ditto - -	4	2	–	–	1	1	2	2	– – –	– 8 –	– 1 –	– 9 –	–	– 1 6	1	– 1 6	– 5 11	–	–	1	
35	Ditto - -	3	1	–	–	2	–	2	1	– – –	– 8 –	– – –	– 8 –	–	– 1 9	2	– 1 6	– 4 7	–	–	1	
36	Ditto - -	2	–	–	–	2	–	2	–	– – –	– 8 –	– – –	– 8 –	–	– 2 –	–	– 2 –	– 4 –				
37	Ditto - -	2	–	–	–	2	–	2	–	– – –	– 7 –	– – –	– 7 –	–	– 2 –	2	– 1 6	– 3 4				
38	Ditto - -	6	2	2	–	3	–	3	3	– – –	– 15 –	– – –	– 15 –	–	– 2 –	2	– 2 6	– 10 4				
38	Families.	176	58	49	1	62	19	82	94	– 2 –	15 17 –	1 15 3	17 14 3	say 84	3 3 5	3s.8d	3 12 11	10 14 3	–	–	54	–
			87																			

38 Families, 176 persons, or to a family 4·63.——87 children, or to a family 2·3.
Average weekly earnings of each family, at all occupations, 10 *s.* 5 ¼ *d.*; the highest being 19 *s.*, and the lowest 5 *s.*
62 Looms earn £. 15. 17 *s.*, or per loom per week 5 *s.* 1 ½ *d.*; whereof 2 persons earn under - - - 3 *s.* each.
10 — above 3 *s.* and under 4 *s.* —
33 — — 4 *s.* — 5 *s.* —
10 — — 5 *s.* — 6 *s.* —
3 — — 6 *s.* — 7 *s.* —
3 — — 7 *s.* — 8 *s.* —
1 — at 9 *s.*
62 None above 9 *s.*

8 Journeymen.

176 Persons earn £. 19. 4 *s.* 3 *d.*, or per head per week 2 *s.* 2 ½ *d.*
It appears that of these 38 families, 34 are married couples, 4 are widows or widowers. About 350 looms in this parish.
This statement was given me by each weaver separately, and I believe the same to be true.
(signed) *John Sims.*

In the BRADFORD DISTRICT, where broad cloth is principally made, the weavers are better off. Their own return gives 6 *s.* per loom for the amount of a week's earnings. The number of looms in the district is stated to be 367; 182 of which were at that moment unemployed, or 49·6 per cent. By the wages (if fully employed), a journeyman could earn at least 13 *s.** a week; deduct 49·6 per cent. for time unemployed, and we have 7 *s.* 6 *d.*, or nearly, for the average weekly net receipt of each loom. In addition to the above 367 looms, there are in this district 159 factory looms. These are generally kept at work, and, being under the master's eye, their profits may be ascertained, and are as follows:—Highest 15 *s.* for each loom, and the lowest 9 *s.*; the average of all 12 *s.* Bradford. Wages.

* A master weaver could earn more.

COUNTY OF WILTS.—Bradford.

STATEMENT concerning Families; Income and Expenditure of 36 Families, whose Houses were visited to procure this Information.

Number.	Nature of Fabric Manufactured by Hand-Loom.	Number in each Family.	Number of Children.		Number of Persons Employed in each Family.				Number too Young or unable to earn Money.	Average Weekly Income of each Family.				Average Number of Working Hours per Week.	Average Weekly Expenditure for Rent, Fuel, and Subsistence.				Number of Children that attend			Number of Apprentices to Hand-Loom Weaving.
			Males.	Females.	In Factory.	In Hand-Loom.	In other Occupation.	Total Number Employed.		From Factory.	From Hand-Loom.	From other Occupation.	Total Amount of Weekly Income.		Amount of Rent per Week.	Amount of Rates per Week.	Amount for Candles, Fuel, and Soap, per Week.	Amount per Week for Food and Clothing.	Pay Schools.	Free Schools.	Sunday Schools.	
										s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.		£. s. d.	s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.				
1	Broad cloth	9	2	6	–	3	3	6	3	– –	1 7 –	– 4 6	1 11 6	–	– 4 –	– 6	– 4 6	1 2 6	–	–	5	–
2	Ditto	3	1	–	–	2	–	2	1	– –	– 18 –	– – –	– 18 –	–	– 4 –	– 6	– 4 –	– 9 6	–			
3	Ditto	1	–	–	–	1	–	1	–	– –	– 7 –	– – –	– 7 6	–	– 1 6	–	– 1 –	– 5 –	–			
4	Ditto	3	1	–	–	2	–	2	1	– –	1 – –	– – –	1 – –	–	– 4 –	– 6	– 4 –	– 11 6	–			
5	Ditto	1	–	–	–	1	–	1	–	– –	– 7 –	– – –	– 7 –	–	– 1 3	–	– 1 –	– 4 9	–			
6	Ditto	6	2	2	2	2	–	4	2	– –	– 18 –	– 1 6	– 19 6	–	– 4 –	– 6	– 4 6	– 10 6	–	–	3	–
7	Ditto	9	3	4	1	2	–	3	6	– –	– 19 –	– 1 6	1 – 6	–	– 4 –	– 6	– 4 6	– 11 6	–			
8	Ditto	3	–	–	–	2	–	2	1	– –	– 18 –	– – –	– 18 6	–	– 4 –	– 6	– 4 –	– 10 –	–			
9	Ditto	8	1	5	–	3	3	6	2	– –	1 – –	– 6 6	1 6 6	–	– 4 –	– 6	– 4 6	– 17 6	–	–	3	–
10	Ditto	5	1	3	–	1	2	3	2	– –	– 10 –	– 3 6	– 13 6	–	– 4 –	– 6	– 2 6	– 6 6	–	–	2	–
11	Ditto	7	5	–	1	1	–	2	5	1 –	– 12 –	– – –	– 13 –	–	– 2 9	– 4	– 2 6	– 7 5	–	–	3	–
12	Ditto	5	2	1	1	2	–	3	2	1 –	– 10 –	– – –	– 11 –	–	– 2 9	– 4	– 2 6	– 5 5	–	–	1	–
13	Ditto	4	1	1	–	1	–	1	3	– –	– 7 –	– – –	– 7 –	–	– 2 9	– 4	– 2 6	– 7 5	–	–	2	–
14	Ditto	8	3	3	2	2	–	4	4	2 –	– 8 –	– – –	– 10 –	–	– 2 9	– 4	– 2 6	– 4 5	–			
15	Ditto	3	1	–	–	1	–	1	2	– –	– 7 –	– – –	– 7 –	–	– 3 6	– 3	– 2 –	– 1 3	–			
16	Ditto	6	2	2	–	3	2	5	1	– –	1 1 –	– 4 –	1 5 –	–	– 3 6	– 6	– 4 –	– 17 –	–			
17	Ditto	9	–	7	–	4	2	6	3	– –	– 12 –	– 3 –	– 15 –	–	– 3 6	– 6	– 3 6	– 7 6	–	–	7	–
18	Ditto	10	4	4	2	2	–	4	6	1 –	– 14 –	– 2 –	– 16 –	–	– 3 6	– 6	– 3 6	– 8 6	–	–	3	–
19	Ditto	9	4	3	–	1	1	2	7	– –	– 7 –	– 1 –	– 8 –	–	– 2 6	– 2	– 1 9	– 3 7	–	–	3	–
20	Ditto	5	–	3	–	1	3	4	1	– –	– 5 –	– 6 –	– 11 –	–	– 1 8	–	– 1 6	– 7 10	–			
21	Ditto	7	3	2	–	2	1	3	4	– –	– 10 –	– 2 –	– 12 –	–	– 1 9	– 2	– 2 6	– 7 7	–	–	4	–
22	Ditto	5	3	–	–	3	1	4	1	– –	– 13 6	– 2 6	– 16 –	–	– 3 6	– 6	– 2 6	– 9 6	–	–	–	–
23	Ditto	7	2	3	–	3	2	5	2	– –	1 1 –	– 3 –	1 4 –	–	– 3 6	– 6	– 3 6	– 16 6	–			
24	Ditto	11	6	3	–	2	2	4	7	– –	1 8 –	– 6 –	1 14 –	–	– 2 –	– 8	– 4 6	1 6 10	–			
25	Ditto	6	2	2	–	1	1	2	4	– –	– 10 –	– 1 –	– 11 –	–	– 2 6	– 3	– 2 6	– 5 9	–	–	1	–
26	Ditto	7	3	2	–	1	1	2	5	– –	– 10 –	– 1 6	– 11 6	–	– 2 4	– 3	– 2 –	– 6 11	–	–	2	–
27	Ditto	2	–	–	–	2	–	2	–	– –	– 18 –	– – –	– 18 –	–	– 2 4	– 8	– 2 6	– 12 6	–			
28	Ditto	7	3	2	–	2	–	2	5	– –	– 14 –	– – –	– 14 –	–	– 2 –	– 1	– 2 6	– 9 5	–	–	2	–
29	Ditto	2	–	–	–	1	1	2	–	– –	– 8 –	– – –	– 8 –	–	– – –	– 6	– 1 6	– 6 –	–			
30	Ditto	8	3	3	–	2	2	4	4	– –	– 16 –	– 3 –	– 19 –	–	– 2 4	– 8	– 2 –	– 14 –	–	–	4	–
31	Ditto	6	3	1	–	2	1	3	3	– –	– 12 –	– 1 –	– 13 –	–	– 2 –	– 6	– 2 –	– 8 6	–	–	1	–
32	Ditto	8	4	2	–	2	2	4	4	– –	– 14 –	– 2 –	– 16 –	–	– 2 9	– 6	– 2 6	– 10 3	–	–	4	–
33	Ditto	10	5	3	–	3	2	5	5	– –	– 14 –	– 3 –	– 17 –	–	– 2 9	– 6	– 2 6	– 11 3	–	–	2	–
34	Ditto	7	4	1	–	1	2	3	4	– –	– 16 –	– 2 –	– 18 –	–	– 2 9	– 6	– 2 6	– 12 3	–	–	4	–
35	Ditto	6	2	2	–	2	–	2	4	– –	– 13 –	– – –	– 13 –	–	– 2 –	– 3	– 2 6	– 8 3	–	–	2	–
36	Ditto	4	1	1	–	2	–	2	2	– –	– 12 –	– – –	– 12 –	–	– 2 –	– 3	– 2 –	– 7 9	–			
36	Families.	217	77	71	9	68	34	111	106	5 –	20 7 6	3 – 6	28 2 –	84	5 – 5	14 –	5 – 9	17 6 10	none	none	58	none
			148																			

Observations on the above Table.

68 Looms earn 20 *l.* 7 *s.* 6 *d.* = 6 *s.* 0 ½ *d.* per week per loom.

Of 217 persons the total income is 28 *l.* 12 *s.* = 2 *s.* 7 ½ *d.* each per week, for all expenses.

Of 217 persons the total income is, deducting rent, fuel, soap, and candles, 17 *l.* 6 *s.* 10 *d.*, or 1 *s.* 7 *d.* per head per week.

36 Families contain 217 individuals, or six to a family; the average weekly earnings of each family, at all occupations, 15 *s.* 7 ¼ *d.*

Of the 68 persons working in hand-looms,

4	earn between	1 *s.*	and	3 *s.* a week for each loom.
2	—	3 *s.*	—	4 *s.* —
11	—	4 *s.*	—	5 *s.* —
4	—	5 *s.*	—	6 *s.* —
22	—	6 *s.*	—	7 *s.* —
3	—	7 *s.*	—	8 *s.* —
11	—	8 *s.*	—	9 *s.* —
7	—	9 *s.*	—	10 *s.* —
1	earns	12 *s.*		—
2	earn between	12 *s.*	and	14 *s.* —
1	earns above	15 *s.*		—
68				

The number unemployed is about 50 per cent. of the whole.

The number working in factories, at other occupations than weaving, is only four.

The

Report from Anthony Austin, Esq., on the South Western Parts of England.

The following is a statement in writing made by a committee of the weavers. Their calculation is about one-fourth below the truth.

"On behalf of the Bradford (Wilts) District Hand-loom Weavers, showing as near as possible the Average Rate of Wages, and the different Stages in Life in which they are able to earn that Rate of Wages.

"First, then, that a man from 20 years to 30, healthy and well, can do 18 pieces in a year, each piece coming to 1 *l.* 12 *s.* net wages, clear of all deductions for attendant expenses, which amount is for the year 28 *l.* 16 *s.*; which amounts to an average of, with responsibility of damage, per week, 11 *s.* 0 $\frac{3}{4}$ *d.* A second class, from 30 years to 50, not able to do so much, 16 chains 48 yards per year at the same rate, will be 24 *l.* 12 *s.* net wages, clear of all expense, will amount to 9 *s.* 5 $\frac{1}{2}$ *d.* per week, which, on the first class, there are many that have a wife and four children, not able to earn anything, to maintain out of that sum. The number of broad hand-looms, in the Bradford districts, amounts to about 367, exclusive of the factory looms, out of which about 182 are now standing for want of work, which will reduce the average wages on the first class to about half the above sum of wages, which reduces the first class to 5 *s.* 6 $\frac{1}{2}$ *d.* per week, and the second class to 4 *s.* 11 $\frac{1}{4}$ *d.* per week; and besides this, weavers are obliged to occupy larger houses than any others, to have room for their work, which consequently exposes them to a larger share of rates of every kind.

"These things, duly considered, must convince every intelligent mind that the hand-loom weavers are absolutely in great distress, and especially those who have but one stroke or one turn of work.

"It remains to inquire into the cause of their distress:

"1st. That it is the low ebb to which the manufacturing trade is sunk.
"2dly. The non-protection of the trade.
"3dly. The want of a free exportation of the cloth when manufactured.

"In the year 1810, a chain at 48 yards was put to work 14 h^{d} 2 b. 11 quarters and 2 nails, which number of threads then was, 2,880, the advance of hundreds since that time, is from that number to 3,480; the yarn made smaller, and about one-third more to put into the same length, which makes it more difficult, requiring more the organ of sight, and the exercise of the senses, and immense labour of the hands and feet, as we have to put into 48 yards now about 570 shoots to every yard more than at the aforesaid period, and have no more per yard than we had in 1810. So it naturally follows, that if we as hand-loom weavers, if we had a full employment, could get but a scanty living. This statement is as near the average as we can make it."

At Melksham, Chippenham and Calne, the state of things is nearly similar. The number of weavers employed by the manufacturers at Melksham may be 80, of whom 32 are in the factory, and of these latter, the weekly earnings are stated to be 13 *s.* to 14 *s.* The out-door weavers reside in the parishes I have before spoken of, and as they work for several masters, their earnings cannot be ascertained.

At Chippenham, about the same number. From a return made by the overseer of 17 families, the results are 86 persons, or five to each family; 54 children, or 3 $\frac{18}{100}$ to a family; 18 persons employed in hand-looms; 31 in other branches of the factory work; and six at other occupations. The earnings by hand-loom average 8 *s.* 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ *d.* to each. (*N. B.*—These are mostly factory weavers). In these 17 families, consisting of 86 persons, we find 55 persons unemployed (being 63·953 per cent.); the amount for food and clothing for each individual of the 86 is 1 *s.* 11 *d.* weekly; * the number of children educated (by this return) is 45, or 83·33 per cent.

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* I am unable in any case to separate the cost of clothing from that of food; but it must be evident that very little can be spared from such weekly earnings as these for raiment, and so accordingly we find it by their general appearance.

COUNTY OF WILTS.—Town of Chippenham.

STATEMENT concerning Families; Income and Expenditure of 17 Families of Hand-Loom Weavers.

Number.	Nature of Fabric Manufactured by Hand-Loom.	Number in each Family.	Number of Children. Males.	Number of Children. Females.	Number of Persons Employed in each Family. In Factory.	In Hand-Loom.	In other Occupation.	Total Number Employed.	Number too Young or unable to earn Money.	Average Weekly Income of each Family. From Factory. £. s. d.	From Hand-Loom. £. s. d.	From other Occupation. s. d.	Total Amount of Weekly Income. £. s. d.	Average Number of Working Hours per Week.	Average Weekly Expenditure for Rent, Fuel, and Subsistence. Amount of Rent per Week. £. s. d.	Amount of Rates per Week.	Amount for Candles, Fuel, and Soap, per Week. £. s. d.	Amount per Week for Food and Clothing. £. s. d.	Number of Children that attend. Pay Schools.	Free Schools.	Sunday Schools.	Number of Apprentices to Hand-Loom Weaving.
1	Woollen -	7	4	1	3	2	1	6	none	– 3 –	– 7 6	5 –	– 15 6	81	– 2 –	none	– 2 6	– 10 6	–	–	3	none
2	Ditto - -	8	6	–	4	1	1	6	1	– 4 –	– 8 6	4 –	– 16 6	88	– 1 6	—	– 2 4	– 12 6	4	–	2	—
3	Ditto - -	4	–	2	3	1	–	4	none	– 3 –	– 8 6	- -	– 11 6	88	– 2 –	—	– 2 1	– 9 –	–	–	2	—
4	Ditto - -	10	4	4	3	1	–	4	5	– 4 6	– 10 –	- -	– 14 6	90	– 3 1	—	– 2 6	– 12 –	–	–	5	—
5	Ditto - -	3	1	–	–	1	–	1	1	- -	– 11 –	- -	– 11 –	90	– 2 4	—	– 2 –	– 8 –	–	–	–	—
6	Ditto - -	9	4	3	5	1	–	6	2	– 9 –	– 10 –	- -	– 19 –	90	– 1 9	—	– 3 1	– 15 –	5	–	6	—
7	Ditto - -	5	2	1	–	1	–	1	3	- -	– 10 –	- -	– 10 –	90	– 2 5	—	– 1 6	– 9 –	1	–	1	—
8	Ditto - -	4	1	1	–	1	1	2	–	- -	– 6 6	1 6	– 8 –	90	– 2 7	—	– 2 4	– 8 –	–	–	2	—
9	Ditto - -	3	–	1	–	1	–	1	–	- -	– 7 –	- -	– 7 –	84	– 2 4	—	– 1 9	– 7 –	–	–	–	—
10	Ditto - -	1	–	–	–	1	–	1	–	- -	– 10 –	- -	– 10 –	84	– – 9	—	– 1 –	– 7 –	–	–	–	—
11	Ditto - -	4	–	2	1	1	–	2	–	– – 6	– 7 6	- -	– 8 –	72	– 2 4	—	– 2 –	– 8 –	–	–	–	—
12	Ditto - -	5	1	3	2	1	–	3	1	– 2 6	– 9 6	- -	– 12 –	84	– 2 7	—	– 2 6	– 11 –	1	–	3	—
13	Ditto - -	8	2	4	3	1	1	5	2	– 5 –	– 10 –	- None but food.	– 15 –	84	– 2 4	—	– 2 6	– 12 –	1	–	5	—
14	Ditto - -	4	–	2	2	1	–	3	–	– 1 6	– 7 –	- -	– 8 6	84	– 2 4	—	– 2 4	– 10 –	–	–	1	—
15	Ditto - -	4	1	1	1	1	1	3	–	– – 6	– 7 –	3 –	– 10 6	84	– 2 4	—	– 2 6	– 10 –	–	–	–	—
16	Ditto - -	5	–	3	3	1	1	5	–	– 3 –	– 10 –	1 –	– 14 –	84	– 2 –	—	– 2 6	– 11 –	1	–	2	—
17	Ditto - -	2	–	–	1	1	–	2	–	– – 6	– 7 6	- -	– 8 –	84	– 2 4	—	– 2 6	– 6 –	–	–	–	—
17	Families.	86	26	28	31	18	6	55	15	1 17 –	7 7 10	14 6	9 19 –	aver. 87	1 17 –	none	1 18 3	8 5 – *	13	–	32	none
			54																			

The above Statement drawn up, for the use of the Hand-loom Inquiry Commission, from the verbal narratives of the above parties.

10 October 1837. *George S. Bradbury*, Relieving Officer, Chippenham, Wilts.

Of these 17 families, 15 appear to contain married couples, one widow or widower, and one single.

17 Families contain 86 persons, or 5 persons to a family.

17 Families contain 54 children, or 3·18 nearly to a family.

Average weekly income of each family, at all occupations, 11 *s.* 2¾ *d.*; the highest being 19*s.* and the lowest 7*s.*

86 Persons have for food and clothing, from all occupations, 8 *l.* 5 *s.*, which amounts to 1 *s.* 11 *d.* per head per week.

18 Persons in hand-looms earn 7 *l.* 7 *s.* 10 *d.*, or 8 *s.* 2 ½ *d.* for each loom.

Number of children educated is 45, or 83·33 per cent., the remainder may be presumed to be too young to receive any education.

* This column should, when added to the two preceding columns, make up the total amount of income and balance with the column so headed, but it will be found to exceed it; this excess arises from the proceeds of rent paid by lodgers residing with the weavers, and of washing and cooking, &c. done for them, of which no account is given in the column of earnings.

Here is one silk factory, containing 56 looms. For the last two years this has been in a declining state, and the trade not more than sufficient to give full employment to 12 looms; 30 women weavers divide this work among them, and the best of them cannot earn more than 3*s.* a week through the year. Two years ago their children could get employment, but that has ceased.

At Calne, in 15 families we find 20 persons working in hand-looms, 9 in factory, 15 in other occupations. The average income from each loom is 7 *s.* 10 *d.*; the children amount to 68, or 4·53 to each family; the amount per week for food and clothing for each individual is 1 *s.* 4 *d.*; the number of children educated about 38 per cent.; the unemployed in the families 35·617 per cent., including young children. These are factory weavers.

COUNTY OF WILTS.—Calne.

STATEMENT concerning Families; Income and Expenditure of 15 Families.

	Nature of Fabric Manufactured by Hand-Loom.	Number in each Family.	Number of Children.		Number of Persons Employed in each Family.				Number too Young or unable to earn Money.	Average Weekly Income of each Family.				Average Number or Working Hours per Week.	Average Weekly Expenditure for Rent, Fuel, and Subsistence.				Number of Children that attend			Number of Apprentices to Hand-Loom Weaving.	Average Amount of Weekly Earnings as furnished by their Employers.
			Males.	Females.	In Factory.	In Hand-Loom.	In other Occupation.	Total Number Employed.		From Factory.	From Hand-Loom.	From other Occupation.	Total Amount of Weekly Income.		Amount of Rent per Week.	Amount of Rates per Week.	Amount for Candles, Fuel, and Soap, per Week.	Amount per Week for Food and Clothing.	Pay Schools.	Free Schools.	Sunday Schools.		
										£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.		£. s. d.	d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.					£. s. d
1	Cassimere	9	4	5	2	4	1	7	2	– 2 6	1 5 –	- -	1 7 6	68	– 2 –	3	– 5 –	1 – 3	1	1	3	1	1 10 6
2	Ditto -	4	3	1	–	1	1	2	2	- -	– 10 –	- -	– 10 –	64	– 2 3	none	– 2 2	– 5 7	1	–	–	–	– 10 –
3	Ditto -	2	1	1	–	1	1	2	–	- -	– 10 –	– 1 6	11 6	64	– 3 –	–	– 1 8	– 6 10	–	–	–	–	– 13 7
4	Ditto -	2	1	1	–	1	1	2	–	- -	– 10 –	- -	– 10 –	64	– 2 –	–	– 1 9	– 6 3	–	–	–	–	– 10 –
5	Ditto -	6	3	3	1	1	1	3	3	– 2 6	– 8 6	– 6 –	– 17 –	64	– 3 –	–	– 3 6	– 10 6	—				
6	Ditto -	5	2	3	–	1	1	2	3	- -	– 10 –	- -	– 10 –	68	– 2 1	2	– 2 3	– 6 6	–	–	1	–	– 13 6
7	Ditto -	2	1	1	–	2	–	2	–	- -	– 15 –	- -	– 15 –	68	– 2 4	–	– 2 4	– 11 4	–	–	–	–	– 15 –
8	Ditto -	2	1	1	–	1	1	2	–	- -	– 16 6	- -	– 16 6	68	– 2 4	3	– 3 –	– 8 11	–	–	–	–	– 18 11
9	Ditto -	11	9	2	3	1	1	5	6	– 5 –	– 7 6	– 2 6	– 12 –	64	– 2 6	–	– 2 6	– 7 –	–	–	–	–	– 12 9
10	Ditto -	1	1	–	–	1	–	1	–	- -	– 9 –	- -	– 12 6	68	– 2 3	3	– 3 6	– 6 6	2	–	4	–	1 3 –
11	Ditto -	1	1	–	–	1	–	1	–	- -	– 9 –	- -	– 9 –	64	– 1 –	–	– – 8	– 7 4	–	–	–	–	– 10 –
12	Bolting cloth.	7	3	4	2	1	1	4	3	– 2 9	– 10 –	- -	– 12 9	68	– 1 6	–	– 1 11	– 9 4	3	–	2	–	– 10 –
13	Serge -	8	3	5	–	1	3	4	4	- -	– 3 –	– 9 6	– 12 6	–	– 2 4	–	– 5 7	– 4 7	2	–	4	}	—
14	Cassimere	6	4	2	1	1	3	5	1	– 1 –	– 4 –	– 10 –	– 15 –	–	– 2 –	–	– 2 –	– 11 –	–	–	2	} *	—
		68	38	30	9	20	15	44	24	– 13 9	7 17 –	1 9 6	10 3 –	66	1 11 7	11	1 18 4	6 8 5	9	1	16	1	—
			68							£.10 – 3					£.10 – 3								
	The heads	–	28																				
			40																				

* These two men work in their own looms, and are only partially employed.

15 Families - - - - - - 68 Persons; or, to a family - - - - - - - 5·333 persons.
15 Ditto - - - - - - - 40 Children; ditto - - - - - - - - 2·666 —
Average weekly earnings of each family, at all occupations, 13 *s.* 6¼ *d.*; the highest being 1 *l.* 7 *s.* 6 *d.*, and the lowest 9 *s.*
Of these 68 persons, I suppose that - 44 are employed - - - - - - - - - 64·705 per cent.
24 unemployed - - - - - - - - - 34·295 —

20 Persons employed at hand-looms earn - - - 7 *l.* 17 *s.*; or - 7 *s.* 10 *d.* per head per loom per week.
68 — have for support in all things - 10 *l.* 0 *s.* 3 *d.*; or 2 *s.* 11¼ *d.* —
Ditto — — deducting rent, soap, fuel and candle, 1 *s.* 4 *d.* for food and raiment.
Of 40 Children, 26 are educated, or about - - - - - - - - - - - 65 per cent.

20 Looms; Weavers' Return.

From	- 1 *s.* to 3 *s.* - - 1
—	- 3 *s.* to 4 *s.* - - 1
—	- 4 *s.* to 5 *s.* - - –
—	- 5 *s.* to 6 *s.* - - –
—	- 6 *s.* to 7 *s.* - - 4
—	- 7 *s.* to 8 *s.* - - 3
—	- 8 *s.* to 9 *s.* - - 5
—	- 9 *s.* to 10 *s.* - - 6

17 Looms; Masters' Return.

The Masters' Return, of 17 of these 20, gives—

From	- 1 *s.* to 7 *s.* - - 4
—	- 7 *s.* to 8 *s.* - - 2
—	- 8 *s.* to 9 *s.* - - 1
—	- 9 *s.* to 10 *s.* - - 6
	13 *s.* - - 1
	14 *s.* - - 2
	23 *s.* - - 1

At Ilminster there is a small quantity of second or livery cloth made, employing only seven looms; the weavers earn more than 10 *s.* a week, and as provisions were then reasonable, they were contented, and wished for no further inquiry.

At Chard there are about 23 weavers, who earn from 10 *s.* to 14 *s.* a week, and are contented with their situation; one of them said, "If any inquiry is instituted here, it ought to be into the condition of the poor people who work at the lace factories."

These lace factories took the place of woollen cloth factories about 13 years ago.

On their first establishment, and for ten years after, they gave employment to the weavers and others whom the ruin of the clothing trade had left nearly destitute. The wages were high, and the town was flourishing; but this trade, like all others, appears to be overdone, and the competition has reduced the wages to a starvation amount.

eport from Anthony Austin, Esq., on the South Western Parts of England.

At Lyme Regis, at Up Lyme, and at Dorchester, there are 40 looms. The weavers are earning 10 *s.* to 12 *s.* a week, and the trade is steady.

Wages.

The following Extracts from the Evidence will show the State of Wages in this District.

Mode of payment.

I must first premise, that the fine broad cloths have generally from 3,230 to 3,800 threads in the warp;* the weaver is paid according to the hundred; a hundred (technically) consists of five biers † (each bier containing 38 threads, or 190 in all), which occupy 95 divisions of the sley or lay. In cassimere, and in some districts also in broad cloth, the hundred consists of 200 threads, and occupies, as its name implies, 100 divisions of the sley. It will be seen that where the warping is by 20 to a bier (no doubt the original mode) instead of 19 (the modern custom in most places), the weaver has two threads more in every hundred to take care of and to mend when broken, than he would have in the general calculation of 19 divisions to the bier ‡; this must of course be taken into consideration when we speak of the price of weaving a certain hundred. The number of biers in a piece of cloth varies according to the nature of the wool and the fancy of the manufacturer, and as the quality of the finished cloth is often supposed to depend upon adapting the hundred to the fineness or other property of the wool, the manfacturers do not willingly give publicity to this circumstance, I shall therefore not individualise in my statements.

An agreement is frequently made to throw the hundreds from 16 to 20 together, and give a uniform price for the whole; this price to the master-weaver is 1 *s.* per yard; if he employs a journeyman, he pays him 7½ *d.* per yard. The cloth is generally woven 50 yards in length, consequently the cost is 50 *s.*; the deductions are, loom standing and rent, 5 *s.*, glue and sizing the warp, 3 *s.*, quilling, 5 *s.*, candle half the year, 9 *d.*, equal together to 13 *s.* 9*d.*; the net receipt will therefore be 36 *s.* 6 *d.* When the manufacturer sizes the yarn, and finds harness and sley, the price is of course less; if he find loom also, the weaver then works as a journeyman.

The time requisite for weaving a piece is always uncertain; woollen yarn not being twisted hard is very liable to breakage, and if by mistake or by a desire to obtain a greater profit, the yarn should be spun smaller than the staple of the wool warrants, this breakage is very considerable, and the consequence is of course a delay in the completion of the cloth, and a great harassment and trial of temper to the weaver. The average, however, may be reckoned at about 18 days (working days); two Sundays must be included in 18 working days, and the third must elapse before a chain could be again put on the loom; in the 18 days, or rather 21 days, the turning on, sizing and drying, are included; the 35 *s.* therefore, provides for three weeks' income, or 11 *s.* 8 *d.* per week §. As the sizing is done by the weaver, and the quilling by his wife or child, if he has one old enough, we must add to his means about 2 *s.* per week. The journeyman receives 7½ *d.* net per yard; this will give 31 *s.* 3 *d.*, equal to 10 *s.* 5 *d.* per week.

The narrow twilled webb, called cassimere, is paid also according to the hundred; the fine sorts are from 13 to 15 hundred, and the price is also 1 *s.* a yard; the time required to weave a piece may be averaged at rather more than the broad cloth, because the threads are closer together, are generally spun smaller, are put four in a division of the sley instead of two ‖ as in the broad-loom,

* Those threads which are placed lengthwise on the loom are called the warp.

† This word is variously spelled. I presume that the correct way, according to modern orthography, would be bear (though this would not convey to us the proper sound), because it is the name given to the number of threads borne or carried by the hand of the warper at one time in warping the chain; porter, from portée, is the term in use in the North.

‡ Cloths are woven as high as 23 hundred; the average may be stated at 18⁰⁰, he then has 36 threads, or nearly one bier more.

§ This is a general average. Good work is frequently finished, by working extra hours, in half this number of days.

‖ Broad-cloths are sometimes woven three threads in a division, and for patent ratteens four, but these are paid higher than plain broad-cloths.

Report from Anthony Austin, Esq., on the South Western Parts of England.

loom, and consequently they break more frequently; the treddles are more numerous to produce the twill, and the feet are shifted at each tread. These difficulties more than counterbalance, with the generality of weavers, the reduced distance which the shuttle has to travel. A dexterous hand will do better on this than on cloth, but as I have stated the generality do not earn so much.

The coarse broad-cloths are usually 15 hundred, and the cassimeres 12 hundred; the shoot is much larger. The time required to weave 50 yards is about half as much as for the fine, and the price is accordingly 6 *d.* per yard. The low price at which these are sold induces the manufacturer to make his yarn of materials not always so good as they ought to be, and therefore the time requisite for beeting or mending the broken threads is often considerable, and the work not so profitable to the weaver as the finer sorts. Where the yarn is good the weaver can do well.

As there are fewer threads, and those larger and more easily seen than in the finer goods, old men and indifferent weavers can do this work; this adds to the competition for it. It is, in fact, generally the resource of the man who is too old to continue at the fine work: he is slow, cannot work many hours, and his earnings are therefore small.

Where the master sizes the work and prepares it for the loom, and finds sley and harness, he gives 9 *d.* instead of 1 *s.* per yard; this must be always remembered in looking over a list of prices.

If the manufacturer finds loom, standing and tackle, and prepares the work, which is the case where the looms are in the factory, or in places rented by the manufacturer, he only pays journeymen's wages; but, however, the manufacturer frequently pays a halfpenny per yard more than the master weaver would pay, and, as the work is under his eye, the yarn is generally better spun and prepared than that which is put out. Having given these preliminary observations by way of explanation, I will quote the evidence on this point.

Evidence.—Frome.

Frome. Summer, 15 *s.* weekly. Winter, 12 *s.* 9 *d.* Cassimere 46 yards the same time as 50 broad. Indifferent workmen, 9 *s.* 4½ *d.* a week.

"A good weaver can, in summer, working as a man, weave one chain in a fortnight and three days (length, 50 yards), and in winter three weeks; fine cassimere about the same time; fancy goods vary. Working 12 hours a day, and two hours out of that for meals (there are some men in the town of Frome, aye, many and many a man, who cannot weave a piece in a month), 1 *s.* per yard is the price paid. The deductions are, hire of loom and tackle, 2 *s.* 6 *d.* per week; seizing, 3 *s.* a piece; quilling, 3 *s.* a piece. His journeymen get 1 *l.* 10 *s.* 3½ *d.*, clear of all deductions."

Cassimere, 12 *s.* 2 *d.* a week.

A cassimere weaver states, "the chains are 46 yards long, the price 1 *s.* per yard, equal to 46 *s.* the piece. Deductions, rent of loom, 2 *s.* 6 *d.*; tackle, 1 *s.*; quilling, 1 *s.*; leaving net, 36 *s.* 6 *d.* Is three weeks weaving a piece, but it takes sometimes a week to put fancy work ready for weaving; must work 16 hours a day to bring in a piece in three weeks; has not earned 4 *l.* for 13 weeks (equal to 6 *s.* 1¾ *d.* per week); has two looms, but each loom has rested a fortnight after finishing a piece. His wife can weave a piece in a month; one child quills."

16 hours a day's work. 6 *s.* 1¾ *d.* weekly, shortness of work.

On cloth of middling quality, journeymen, 10 *s.* 5 *d.* weekly.

A journeyman states, that "he gets 7½ *d.* out of a shilling; the price is 1 *s.* per yard; it will take him three weeks to weave a fine cloth 50 yards long. Generally weaves on middling sorts 15^{00} 4 brs, warped by 20 (double) threads to a bier; 9 *d.* a yard is the price for this sort of work. There is not much difference in the earnings (because it is done in less time), but would, on the whole, rather weave fine work."

Wages on coarse cloth lower now than in 1820.

J. S. weaves all sorts of work, broad, narrow, and fancy. Is a journeyman, gets 7½ *d.* out of 1 *s.*, and pays back 7½ *d.* out of the piece. The wages are lower now than they were in 1820 (for coarse cloth). Eight years ago the weaver received 10 *d.* yard for 15^{00}, it is now 8 *d.*; this is the general price. It must be a good workman to earn 1½ *d.* an hour on the work in this town.

Journeymen, 11 *s.* a week. Shortness of employment makes it only 4 *s.* 1½ *d.* Ditto, 5 *s.*

W. B. is a journeyman, gets 8½ *d.* out of 1 *s.*; he gets 16 *s.* 6 *d.* out of a piece (which, consequently, is paid for 1 *l.* 3 *s.* 3½ *d.*); the work takes two days to get ready and eight to weave (this is 16 *s.* 6 *d.* for 10 days' work), but for the last three months has had only one chain in a month.

H. P. weaves 17 hundred and 2 biers, gets 1 *s.* a yard, but for want of work has not earned 5 *s.* a week for the last two years.

Report from Anthony Austin, Esq., on the South Western Parts of England.

Westbury.

T. A. Eight pence per yard is the price for weaving, nominally 9 *d.*, but 4 *s.* out of a piece is stopped for damages; the work is prepared ready for the loom, and no deductions, except rent, 1 *s.* a piece, and quilling 2 *s.* 5 *d.*; finishes a piece, 46 yards, in 19 or 20 days; works 16 hours a day.

G. W. gets

for 14^{00} to 15^{00} cassimere - 1 *s.* per yard, ready sized.
12 hundred and 2 biers - 10 *d.* —
coarse tweeds - - - 6 *d.* This takes nine days to finish a piece 46 yards. Plays about a fortnight between each piece.

Cassimeres, 9 *s.* 1 *d.* weekly.

J. H. works on coarse double-milled cassimere at 6½ *d.* a yard; it is as hard work as the fine, and will require 16 hours' work per day to finish 45 yards in 15 or 16 days.

Tweeds, 15 *s.* 4 *d.* gross weekly; shortness of work makes it 7 *s.* a week.

Cassimeres, 10 *s.* 4½ *d.* net weekly, working 16 hours a day.

Trowbridge.

Trowbridge.

W. C., a weaver, says that cassimere chains are generally warped 42 yards long, and the same price given for all hundreds.

Buck and doe skin - - - - 10½ *d.* a yard.
Diamond pattern - - - - - 10½ *d.* —
Caledonias - - - - - - 1 *s.* 5 *d.*; deducting for warping, sizing, and spooling, 4 *s.* 6 *d.* on a piece.

It takes three weeks, working 12 hours a day, to finish 42 yards. The Diamond patterns take more time, say one month; the Caledonias, one month. The gross earnings, 12 *s.* per week. The deductions are, quilling, 10 *d.* a week; rent of loom, 10 *d.*; candle, 2½ *d.*: in all, 1 *s.* 10½ *d.*; net earnings, 10 *s.* 1½ *d.* Has played full half his time, and that brings his earnings to 5 *s.* 0½ *d.* per week.

Caledonias, 10 *s.* 1 *d.* net weekly; shortness of work makes it 5 *s.* 0½ *d.*

W. S. Cassimere work, 41 yards long, at 1 *s.* per yard.
Fancy cassimere - - - 1 *s.* —

Second broad cloth net wages 12 *s.* 4 *d.* a week.

W. W. Could finish a piece of broad cloth, second sort, in a fortnight, 40 yards, at 8 *d.* yard. Has to pay out of it, rent of loom, 2 *s.*; twine, oil and fire, 1 *s.*; glue and candles, 2 *s.* 6 *d.* (no charge is made for sizing); quilling, 3 *s.*: in all, 8 *s.* 6 *d.*; leaving net, 1 *l.* 14 *s.* 8 *d.* One child quills for him.

At 12 hours a day, 8 *s.* 9 *d.* a week net but reduced to half by shortness of work.

J. M. gets 7½ *d.* a yard clear. Works 15 hours a day; at 12 hours a day it will take three weeks to finish a piece. He sometimes plays three weeks, sometimes four weeks, sometimes seven weeks.

At 16 hours a day, 12 *s.* gross earnings.

C. S. weaves fine work; gets 1 *s.* a yard; finishes a piece in 3½ weeks; works from 15 to 16 hours a day. His journeyman works 16 hours a day, and is rather longer than 3½ weeks.

J. D. gets for 15^{00} to 16^{00} coloured, 8 *d.* per yard; light colours, 7½ *d.*
17^{00} - 9 *d.*

Coarse cloth. 9 *s.* 4 *d.* a week net.

12^{00} to 13^{00} half drab, 5½ *d.* a yard; 48 yards can be woven of this sort in 10 days (equal 13 *s.* 1½ *d.* for six working days). 9^{00} is paid 4½ *d.* per yard. A piece is finished in seven days, and he receives 9 *s.* 4 *d.* for it.

R. B. is a manufacturer of fancy cassimeres; 1 *s.* per yard is the price for weaving common cassimeres. Silk chains are paid 1 *s.* 1 *d.* or 1 *s.* 2 *d.* a yard. Some weave 47 yards in three weeks, some take five weeks; average, one month.

Women on fancy cassimere working 14½ hours daily, 6 *s.* 8 *d.* per week.

J. W. can sometimes finish a piece in three weeks; his journeywoman took five weeks, working from six o'clock in the morning till eight at night; he made her work from four till eight, and then she finished a piece in four weeks; her earnings were then 6 *s.* 8 *d.* per week.

Bradford.

17 *s.* 8½ *d.* a week. 13 *s.* 4 *d.* weekly. Shortness of work reduces it to 8 *s.* 10½ *d.* per week. A whole family of eight children, 1 *l.* 8 *s.* 6 *d.* per week. Another manufacturer's prices give 13 *s.* 9 *d.* a week. Shortness of work reduces it to 6 *s.* 10½ *d.* Woman's labour.

J. H. weaves broad cloth; length of chain 48 yards, price 11 *d.* a yard, equal to 45 *s.* the piece. Deductions, sizing, 4 *s.*; spooling, 1 *s.* 5 *d.*; gas light, 5 *d.*; quilling, 3 *s.* 9 *d.*; in all, 9 *s.* 7 *d.*; leaving net, 35 *s.* 5 *d.* A piece can be woven in 13 or 14 days, working 13½ hours a day: this is, if woven in the manufacturer's loom; but if woven at home, the deductions are, in addition, rent of loom and tackle, 2 *s.* 8 *d.*; wear and tear, 1 *s.* 3 *d.*; candle, 1 *s.* 1 *d.*; quilling, 3 *s.* 9 *d.*; leaving 26 *s.* 8 *d.* or 13 *s.* 4 *d.* Is not supplied regularly; gets about one piece in three weeks. Has three looms: his children weave in two of them, and three children quill.

W. R. (weaves for another manufacturer); he gets 1 *l.* 7 *s.* 6 *d.* net, and can weave a piece in a fortnight, one with another, throughout the year; has had about one piece a month for the last two years. His wife weaves also, and is two days longer about a piece than he is.

W. L.

W. L. gets a piece once in three weeks; works in a factory loom, price net 1 *l.* 10 *s.* 10 *d.*, or 10 *s.* 3 ½ *d* a week. — 10 *s.* 3 ½ *d.* a week.

J. B. (works for another manufacturer); he gets 11 pieces in a year, equal to 9*s*. a week. — 9 *s.* a week.

MELKSHAM.—*Cloths and Cassimeres.*

T. N. weaves broad cloth in factory loom; gets 9 *d.* a yard; pays for tying on, 1 *s.* a piece, and for gas, 10 *d.*; quilling, 4*s.* 2 *d.*; in all, 5 *s.* 10 *d.*; net money for a piece, 1 *l.* 11 *s.* 6 *d.* Gets a chain once in three weeks; could weave 20 in a year. — Does earn 10 *s.* 6*d.* Could earn 12 *s.* 1 ¼ *d.*

WILTON.—*Cassimeres.*

J. H. has 8 *d.* a yard for weaving white cassimere, and 9 *d.* for coloured. Pays out of that, spooling and warping, 2 *s.* 3 *d.*; glue and sizing, 3 *s.*; loom and harness, 2 *s.*, 3 *d.*; quilling, 2 *s.* 6 *d.* Gross wages, 40 *s.* 6 *d.*; net, 30 *s.* 6 *d.*: average time, one month. — 7 *s.* 6 *d.* per week.

CHARD.

J. P., weaver of coarse broad cloth, cannot say that his earnings exceed 10 *s.* to 12 *s.* a week.

Twenty-three years ago the whole of the preceding great clothing district was in its most flourishing condition; the manufacturers were at least twice as numerous as at the present time, and employment could be had at good wages by all who were willing to obtain it. About this time the Corn Laws and the Resumption of Cash Payments Acts were passed; the trade fell off*; many manufacturers failed, or gave up business, and the sufferings of the manufacturing labourers, for want of work, was extreme. The usual measures were resorted to, such as altering roads and allotments of land (which brought many to permanent out-door work), charitable donations, &c. At that time parish relief was also among the means of subsistence within their reach; the number of weavers gradually diminished, but there are still one-third more than the trade requires, or is likely to require. Power-looms are not extensively used in this district, and have not been the cause directly or indirectly of lowering the wages (which in fact have remained stationary for many years); but it is to be feared that their introduction into the neighbouring county (Gloucestershire), and the effect produced on the wages there, will ere long be felt in this part of the country.

Corn Laws. Cash payments.

Power-looms.

I have said above that the number of weavers is greater by one-third than the trade requires. On referring to the evidence, I find it stated by a manufacturer, that he "endeavours to give constant work to all he employs, but cannot do so at the present time." And further, "cannot give any reason why weavers should be worse off, or get less wages than other classes of work-people, without it is that they are more numerous." Again, "there are a great number of weavers in Frome that are poorly employed; and if I saw all the manufacturers' books, I should be convinced of that." Again below, the same witness says, "other weavers, who have looms of their own, cannot get above half work." A manufacturer, employing 300 looms, states, that "the cassimere weavers are unemployed much of their time, at present, from the superabundance of hands in this branch of weaving." "Thinks that a considerable number of weavers in Frome (particularly weavers of coarse work) have not sufficient work for their maintenance; sees no chance of increase of trade, or of any speedy alleviation to this state of things."

The number of weavers too great for the demand.

Evidence.

I have found great difficulty in getting any one to assign a reason why weavers are so numerous, and, consequently, worse paid than other classes. The weavers are unwilling to admit that weaving requires little skill, and yet, on the other hand, they inadvertently say that "colts" (persons who are not children of weavers, and have not been brought up to the trade,) are taken in by some master weavers, to the great injury of the rest: This seems to prove that no great skill is needful. Industry and attention, with six months' close practice, are, I believe, the chief requisites; and the facility with which the art is learned, may account for the number of those who are initiated in it.

Difficulty of assigning a reason.

On the subject of the qualifications necessary to make a good weaver, and the time required for learning, we have the following evidence, which is somewhat contradictory; but, if carefully considered, will bear me out in the conclusion I have made above. A very extensive manufacturer states, that "sup-

Presumed cause of the superabundance.

* One manufacturer states, that 25 years ago 200 pieces of cloth were manufactured in a week, and now not above 100.

This ruin of the cloth trade following so closely on the heels of the corn law, was naturally considered as an effect of that law.

Report from Anthony Austin, Esq., on the South Western Parts of England.

Evidence.

posing a young man (whose age and strength were sufficient for the labour) had not seen a loom before, he might (if an apt person) be left to himself in an hour, and at the end of a week would be a perfect workman as a journeyman. The preparing the chain, the sizing, and the turning it on, are the operations requiring skill: some men would never acquire it, but an apt person would acquire it in six months." A weaver examined on this subject states that "weaving is not very difficult to learn; but to become a weaver, competent in all its branches, requires a considerable deal of practice. There is a great difference in the skill of different weavers. Many good weavers are out of employment.

A master weaver, possessed of several looms, worked by journeymen, says, "that, to make a good weaver, a boy must be put to quilling at eight years old, and by the time he is 21 he will make a good workman; but if a lad (who is not a weavers' son) be taken at 14, he will require to serve seven years apprenticeship, and unless he had done so he would not employ him. Does not employ any others."

A manufacturer of blankets states, that "all his weavers, except one, were husbandmen, whom he has taught to weave."

Masters have more power over weavers than over other workmen.

It is, I think, very evident that they are too numerous to combine together with effect, and by that means to keep up the price of their labour; and that, therefore, the master has more power to reduce their wages than those of other branches, who, being in smaller numbers, can unite more easily. [One of the special questions.] This superabundance is not likely to diminish; they are too poor to have means of apprenticing their children to better trades, where a premium is required, and the other means of lessening the superabundance, viz. the increase of trade, appears to be hopeless.

Pecuniary condition.

That there is very considerable suffering, and that many families are in a worse condition (as regards food and clothing) than the inmates of a poorhouse, I have very little doubt; and they would willingly receive relief, if it could be obtained as formerly, at their own houses. Their dread of the confinement and of the discipline of the workhouse induces them to struggle to the last, rather than enter it. The master weaver is worse situated in this respect than the generality of workmen are. He would not be received until he had sold his loom, and, having done so, his means of obtaining a living are gone, and he becomes an inmate for life. That they have made great efforts to keep out, and have only been driven there by actual starvation, the following statement, which was made to me by the master of a workhouse, at a time when I was not prepared to record it in my evidence books, will amply prove. He was regretting that the nature of the food (gruel), its scantiness, or some other cause, produced great mortality in the workhouse; but, as for the poor weavers, he verily believed that their children, in some instances, died of repletion. They had been previously brought so low, that the workhouse allowance was too good for them; this may be, perhaps, an exaggeration, but in that district* the reality approaches too near to it. The evidence of overseers and guardians proves that very few weavers are in the poorhouses; and the returns of the unions (poor law) will show that not many (and those principally the sick, or very old,) have any relief from the parishes.

Before quitting the woollen-cloth district, it may not be amiss to give a statement of the progress of the woollen manufacture, from the time when nearly all the operations were performed by hand, to the present moment when machinery has arrived at a state of perfection, which enables the manufacturer to produce four times the quantity of the finished article with the same amount of human labour.

The weaver, instead of suffering by these improvements, was uniformly benefited by them †; the demand for cloth increased faster than weaving labour could be procured to supply that demand; the material he had to work upon was stronger and smoother: one alteration of his loom enabled him to dispense with his journeyman, who immediately found work for himself. His wages remained the same under all these facilities, and he probably thought that the day of adversity was never to arrive. The observations at the foot of each table will be sufficiently explanatory of their contents, I will therefore insert them without further comment.

* Gloucestershire; the weavers of Somerset and Wilts are not yet reduced so low. I mention it only to show that the distress must be great indeed before the workhouse returns will give any evidence of it.

† Until the year 1816, when the trade began to stagnate. Since 1820 it has retrograded.

TABLES showing the TIME required by one Individual to make a piece of Superfine Broad Cloth (woollen); the Cost of Human Labour for the same; the Cost of Interest on Dead Capital, Wear and Tear of Machinery, and of the Power required to drive it; and the Amount of Weekly Earnings of one Person in each Branch.

No. 1.—From the Year 1781 to 1796.

Nature of Employment.	Quantity.	Person Employed, whether Man, Woman or Child.	TIME.	Cost for a Piece.	Weekly Earnings or Wages.
			HRS. MIN.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.
Cleansing the wool -	80 lbs. -	one man - - -	3 22	– – 9	- - - – 12 2
Picking - - -	80 lbs. -	one woman - -	101 2	– 8 5¼	- - - – 4 6
Scribbling by hand -	75 lbs. -	one man - - -	96 –	– 11 8	- - - – 8 –
Spinning warp - -	26 lbs. -	one woman & one child	260 –	1 12 6	woman - – 7 – child - – 2 –
Spinning abb - -	44 lbs. -	- - one woman and two children.	352 –	1 9 4	woman - – 6 1 child - – 2 – child - – 2 –
Spooling warp - -	26 lbs. -	one old woman -	52 –	– 2 2	- - - – 3 –
Warping - - -	26 lbs. -	one woman - -	12 –	– – 8½	- - - – 4 –
Reeling abb - -	44 lbs. -	one child - -	12 –	– – 6	- - - – 3 –
Weaving - - -	- 1 piece 34 ells.	- - two men and one child.	364 –	2 15 6	the master - – 12 3¾ journeyman – 3 6 child - – 2 – sizing 9 *d.*
Scouring - - -	ditto -	one man and one boy	3 –	– – 6	not known.
Burling - - -	ditto -	one woman - -	32 –	– 3 –	- - - – 3 6
Felting - - -	ditto -	one man and one boy	10 –	– 8 –	Boy - - – 7 – The weekly earnings not known; hours of work uncertain and unlimited; if paid by the week, 1 *l.* 4 *s.*
Raising the wool, called roughing and mosing.	ditto -	one man - - -	88 –	– 14 2	- - - – 11 –
Cutting or shearing -	ditto -	one man - - -	72 –	– 10 –	- - - – 10 –
Pressing and finishing	ditto -	one man - - -	2 –	– 1 –	- - - – 10 –
		Total - £.		8 18 2¾	

* Out of this he had to pay house rent, and all expenses of wear and tear of loom and tackle. His wages were the same as in the second period, Table No. 2, but his work (spun by hand) was worse.

	hrs.	m.		d.	h.	m.
Thus it will be seen that it required the labour of a man - -	1,002	22	or	83	6	22
— a woman -	797	2	or	66	5	2
— a child -	1,353	–	or	112	9	–
Total quantity of human labour - -	3,152	24	—	262	8	24

The money expended for human labour, 8 *l.* 5 *s.* 2¾ *d.*
The cost for interest of dead capital, wear and tear, probably 2 *s.*; this must be very uncertain.
The other expenses for oil, soap, &c., used in the manufacture, not ascertained.
A journeyman weaver would engage himself for a year at 3 *s.* 6 *d.* per week.

No. 2.—From the Year 1796 to 1805.

In the year 1796, complicated machinery was introduced for scribbling and carding the wool, and for spinning the yarn, requiring large buildings, great power to drive it, and considerable investment of capital.

Nature of Employment.	Quantity.	Person Employed, whether Man, Woman or Child.	TIME.	Cost for a Piece, 38 Yards.	Weekly Earnings or Wages.
			HRS. MIN.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.
Cleansing the wool -	80 lbs. -	one man - - -	3 22	– – 9	- - - – 12 2
Picking - - -	- -	one woman - -	101 2	– 10 2¼	- - - – 5 2
Scribbling by machine	75 lbs. -	one child - -	14 –	– – 7	- - - – 3 –
Carding by machine -	75 lbs. -	one child - -	13 21	– – 7	- - - – 3 –

Nature of Employment.	Quantity.	Person Employed, whether Man, Woman or Child.	TIME. HRS.	MIN.	Cost for a Piece, 38 Yards. £.	s.	d.	Weekly Earnings or Wages.	£.	s.	d.
Sloobing by machine	25 lbs.	one man and two children.	7	4	–	2	7¼	man children	–	19	4 6
Spinning warp	25 lbs.	one woman	38	17	–	11	1		–	14	4½
Spinning abb	50 lbs.	one man and two children.	34	17	–	11	5½	man each child	– –	19 2	–½ 6
Reeling abb	50 lbs.	one child	12	–	–	–	6		–	3	–
Spooling by machine	25 lbs.	one woman	24	–	–	1	6¼		–	6	–
Warping round bar	25 lbs.	one woman	10	–	–	–	8½		–	5	–
Weaving by spring shuttle.	1 piece, 34 ells.	one man and one child	252	–	2	11	6	man child sizing 1 s. 6 d.	1 –	2 2	6* –
Scouring	ditto	one man and one boy	3	–	–	–	6	not ascertained.			
Burling	ditto	one woman	32	–	–	3	–		–	6	–
Felting	ditto	one man and a boy	12	–	–	8	–	as in preceding table.			
Raising the wool and dressing it, called roughing and mosing.	ditto	one man and one boy	12	–	–	3	8	the boy by the week, the man	– –	7 15	– –
Cutting or shearing	ditto	one man	88	–	–	14	9	by the week	–	12	–
Pressing and finishing	ditto	one man	2	–	–	1	–		–	12	–
		Total £.			6	3	5				

* The spring shuttle came into use, and one man was able to do the work, which in the previous period had been done by two; the yarn spun by machine was also much better than that spun by hand.

	hrs.	min.	da.	hrs.	m.
In this period the human labour was, for a man	413	43 or	34	5	43
— a woman	205	19 or	17	1	9
— a child	401	3 or	33	5	3
Total	1,020	5 —	85	–	35

In the former period, the total of hours was 3,152 } The difference being 67·7 per cent., the relative pro-
As above it is only 1,020 } portion about 33 per cent.

On the cost 6 *l.* 6 *s.* 5 *d.*, the difference is 29 per cent., relative proportion about 78 per cent.

The cost for power and machinery I reckon 11 *s.*, or 350 per cent. on the former cost of 2 *s.*

No. 3.—From 1805 to 1820.

No sensible alteration took place in wages during this period; but the introduction of machinery for shearing the cloths reduced the quantity of human labour, and the amount will stand as under:

Cutting or shearing, one man 18 hours (instead of 72), cost 3 *s.* 9 *d.* weekly wages, 15 *s.*

	hours.	min.	days.	ho.	min.
Man's labour	359	43 or	29	11	43
Woman's labour	205	19 or	17	1	19
Child's labour	401	3 or	33	5	3
Total quantity of labour	966	5 or	80	6	5

Total cost of labour, 5*l.* 15 *s.* 5 *d.*; cost for machinery increased to 12 *s.*

Note.—This alteration added considerably to the dead capital, and to the power required for driving machinery, wear, and tear, &c.

Out of every four men employed in shearing, three were thrown out of work; but the briskness of trade found employment for most of them.

No. 4.—From 1820 to 1827.

Wages continued the same, but the demand for labour was diminished. An important improvement in the machines for cutting cloth, an invention by Mr. Lewis, of Brinscomb, enabled the manufacturer to substitute boys for men, to save 12 hours labour in cutting the cloth; and the new machine required much less power to drive it, and less space in the building it occupied. The cost was reduced to 2 *s.* 6 *d.* instead of 3 *s.* 9 *d.*

Quantity of man's labour reduced to 347 hours 43 minutes.

No. 5.—The Year 1828.

The introduction of mules for spinning at this period lessened still further the quantity of human labour, diminished the space required for machinery, and reduced the cost both for labour and for rent: this is the latest improvement until the introduction just now of power-looms. This year's wages are arranged in a tabular form (to correspond with Tables Nos. 1 and 2).

Nature of Employment.	Quantity.	Person Employed, whether Man, Woman or Child.	TIME. HRS.	TIME. MIN.	Cost for a Piece 38 Yards, when finished. £.	s.	d.	Weekly Earnings or Wages. £.	s.	d.
Cleansing the wool	80 lbs.	one man	3	22	–	–	9	–	12	2
Picking	–	one woman	102	2	–	10	2¼	–	5	2
Scribbling by machine	75 lbs.	one child	14	–	–	–	7¼	–	3	–
Carding by machine	–	one child	13	21	–	–	7	–	3	–
Sloobing by billy	25 lbs.	one man and two children.	7	4	–	2	7¼	man –	19	4
								children each –	2	6
Spinning warp and abb by two mules.	75 lbs.	one man and one child	12	–	–	1	9	man –	15	–
								girl –	3	–
Reeling	both frequently dispensed with.									
Spooling										
Warping	25 lbs.	one woman	10	–	–	–	8½	–	5	–
Weaving	1 piece of 34 ells.	one man and one child	252	–	2	11	6	man –	15	4½*
								child –	2	–
Scouring	ditto	one man and one boy	3	–	–	–	6	not known.		
Burling	ditto	one woman	32	–	–	3	–	–	6	–
Felting	ditto	one man and one boy	12	–	–	8	–	as in preceding tables.		
Roughing and mosing	ditto	one man and one boy	12	–	–	3	8	by the week –	15	–
								boy –	7	–
Boiling, a new operation	ditto	one man	1	–	–	–	2			
Cutting by the new machine.	ditto	one man	6	–	1	3	–	by the week –	15	–
Pressing	ditto	one man	2	–	–	1	–	by the week –	12	–
			Total		4	7	3½			

	In 1781.	In 1828.	
Man's labour	1,002 22	310 26	relative proportion about 31 to 100.
Woman's labour	797 2	144 2	— 18 to 100.
Child's labour	1,353 –	322 29	— 23·8 to 100.
Total	3,152 24	777 57	relative proportion 24·6 to 100.
Expenditure for labour £.	8 18 2¾	4 7 3	relative proportion about 50 to 100.

It will be seen, that, from 1781 to the present time, no change had taken place in the price per ell given for weaving. The weavers in their petition to their masters, about the year 1825, say that "for 96 years their wages had remained unaltered;" but by the introduction of the spring-shuttle, enabling one man to do the work of two, and by the improved spinning, they were enabled to earn, from the year 1796 to the year 1820, or thereabout, double the weekly amount they had previously earned. The increased trade of this district, until the latter year, had absorbed all the hands which the use of machinery had thrown out of work; but since that period trade has been bad, the great superabundance of hands has caused competition, and great distress has been the consequence. "Thirty years ago a weaver was as precious as a jewel," as one of that class told us. No alteration has taken place since 1828 in Somerset and Wilts.

* The cause of the difference of the weaver's earnings, comparing this table with the preceding, is that the yarn was spun smaller, and consequently more time was required to finish each piece, the price remaining the same. Skilful weavers can earn more than the average here set down.

Report from Anthony Austin, Esq., on the South Western Parts of England.

The following is a List (furnished by the Committee of the Weavers' Union) of the Expense, on a low estimate, as they assert, of a Man, his Wife, and Three Children, by which it appears that the smallest Weekly Sum sufficing for procuring the Necessaries of Life is 15 *s.* 8 *d.* per week.

	Per Week. s.	d.
Rent	2	–
Wood and coal	1	3
Candles	–	3½
Soap	–	3½
Starch	–	1
Ashes (for washing)	–	1
Pins, needles, and worsted	–	1½
Man's shoes	–	3
Woman's ditto	–	1½
Three children's ditto	–	3
Man's bread	1	5
Cheese, 1 lb.	–	7
Meat, 1 lb.	–	7
Butter, ¼ lb.	–	3
Sugar	–	3½
Coffee	–	1
Vegetables	–	7
Woman's bread	1	2
Butter, ¼ lb.	–	3
Cheese, ½ lb.	–	4
Sugar, ½ lb.	–	3½
Meat	–	6
Tea	–	3
Vegetables	–	6
Bread for three children	1	9
Cheese, ¾ lb.	–	6
Butter, ¾ lb.	–	9
Sugar, ¾ lb.	–	5½
Vegetables	–	4½
	15	8

No clothes except shoes included in the above.

The above is taken from a printed document circulated by the weavers at the time of their strike in 1828. The price of the 4lb. loaf was then, I believe, 8 *d.*, consequently they allow for the man 8½ lbs. per week of bread, for the woman 7 lbs., and for each child 3½ lbs. The sum charged for vegetables, if laid out in potatoes, would produce, at the average price of 7*s.* 3*d.* for 224 lbs., or 2½ lbs. for 1 *d.*, 17½ lbs. per week for the man, 15 lbs. for the woman, and 3½ lbs. for each child.

The Serge Trade.

At Collumpton, in Devonshire, the serge trade is carried on extensively by only one firm. The number of looms employed by them is near 500; some of which are in the town of Collumpton, and the remainder in different villages adjacent. The wages on this article are low, and this is the only town in Devonshire where men undertake to weave it. The proportion of men to women is 250 to 62. Children are also employed, and the number of them is equal to that of the women.

In light work, such as serge weaving, which can be done by women and children, when it becomes needful to lower the wages women are employed, who will readily undertake it, at a lower price than men receive. This is not considered a general reduction of wages, and no notice is taken of it; indeed, it appears to be a custom in every trade to pay women at a lower rate than men for the same article. I have found it in the broad-cloth trade, in the blanket trade, and in the silk-velvet trade. By this process (unless the men consent to take the lower rate of wages) the whole of the weaving is gradually put into the hands of women (no boys are under these circumstances taught), and the men are compelled to seek other work. At Collumpton, however, the men united themselves in a body, and were able to resist this indirect mode of lowering wages for a time, and to keep up the price.* The industry and skill of one manufacturer enabled him to continue the trade, notwithstanding this combination, and even to increase it.

In the other towns in this county (Devon), men (except a few old ones who may have pensions, as old soldiers, or other auxiliary means of maintenance,) have long ceased to be weavers of serges.

The trade here (Collumpton) has undergone a great change within the last 30 years. There were at that time 40 different manufacturers, small capitalists, now there is only one; but the quantity made by him equals that which was made by all the others. The possession of improved and costly machinery, which small capitalists cannot purchase, gives an advantage to those who, by skill, industry, and enterprise, or by capital, have been able to obtain it, which the less fortunate, less industrious, or less rich, cannot compete with, and they are driven from the field. It rarely happens that the whole of the trade (as in the preceding instance) remains.

At

* See page 4 of this Report.

At this place there was a manufactory for fine woollen cloths, but that has entirely left.

The trade which the men by combination (as mentioned above) have been able to retain, is, however, little better than agricultural labour, and affords, for 12 hours' work per day, only from 7*s.* 6*d.* to 9*s.* 6*d.** per week, according to the skill of the workman; but as long as the trade is flourishing, they have the advantage of the agriculturist, in being able to give more profitable employment to their children.

Evidence.

Serges.

Serges.

J. U. weaves serges; receives 5*s.* for 34 yards, which we can finish on the average of winter and summer, bad workmen and good, in four days; this produces 7*s.* 6*d.* a week; deduct size and sizing 6*d.*, loom standing 2*d.*, quilling 5*d.*, tackle 2*d.*, in all 1*s.* 4*d.* a piece, equal to 3*s.* 8*d.* nett for four days, equal to 6*s.* 5*d.* a week nett.

6*s.* 5*d.* net.

Serge flannels give him 1*s.* 6*d.* a week more; three of his family are employed; the whole earnings, 19*s.* a week.

Serge flannels, 7*s.* 11*d.*

Wellington.

J. C. weaves serges; cannot, when in full work, earn more than 7*s.* 6*d.* a week. On the lower sorts of serges, which are paid for at the rate of 1*s.* 7*d.* a piece, cannot earn more than 6*s.* 6*d.*; can only do four pieces a week.

Serges, 7*s.* 6*d.* a week.

Second sort serges, 6*s.* 6*d.* a week.

Blankets.

Blankets.

C. H. weaves blankets; the scale of payment is complicated, but it is calculated to render the earnings nearly uniform on all sorts: take the 12 quarter sort, there are four qualities to this sort, the medium is paid 5*s.* 6½*d.* a cut, or 11*s.* 1*d.* the chain. He can do a cut in three days; the average is three days and a half; the least skilful can do it in three days and a half, but it requires considerable strength to do this sort of work, every man is not strong enough; 11*s.* 1*d.* a week gross. The deductions are, light 1½*d.*, cooking 2*d.*; there is no quilling required for those who work in factory looms; the nett earnings are 10*s.* 9½*d.* a week.

10*s.* 9*d.* a week.

J. S. weaves blankets; is paid only 9*s.* for his sort of blankets, and it will take him seven working days to finish a piece, this will be 7*s.* 10½*d.* a week, including Sundays.

7*s.* 10½*d.* a week.

Eliz. C., weaver; maintains herself by weaving blankets; it takes a fortnight to weave a piece, working 10 hours a day; cannot have strength to weave longer; a man might weave more hours; her earnings are 5*s.* a week when employed, which is not always the case.

Women at blanket weaving earn 5*s.* a week.

By the returns of education, the number of children of the Established Church attending daily schools is 288, of whom 75 are children of weavers; besides an infant school, where at present only six are educated. At the church Sunday-school, 130 children, of whom 33 are weavers' children. At the Sunday dissenting schools, 465 children attend, of whom 158 are children of weavers. Of this 465, 136 (including 36 weavers' children) go also to day-schools. Total 430 at daily-schools, of whom 69 are children of weavers; 595 at Sunday-schools, of whom 191 are weavers' children. Some of the Sunday-school children may be included in the number at day-schools; but on the other hand, we have no account of those children who frequent the dame schools.

Education.

* There are a few serges woven double on a broad loom, which pay the weaver from 9*s.* to 11*s.*

SCHOOLS.

PARISH, and DESCRIPTION of SCHOOL	Children. At Day Schools.	Children. At Sunday Schools.	Children of Hand-Loom Weavers. At Day Schools.	Children of Hand-Loom Weavers. At Sunday Schools.	Total, E. C. At all Schools.	Total, E. C. Of whom are Hand-Loom Weavers' Children.	
ESTABLISHED CHURCH.							
COLLUMPTON.—DEVONSHIRE.							
National School - (daily) - - - - -	199	- -	75	- -	- -	- -	- - Bell's System, reading, writing, arithmetic, &c., and needlework.
Mr. Hill's School - ditto - - - - -	49	- -	none.	charge too high			
Mr. Jordan's School ditto - - - - -	40	- -	none.				- - Ordinary system, reading, writing and arithmetic.
Infant School - - - ditto - - - - -	6	- -	none.				
National Sunday School - - - - - -	- -	130	- -	33			
	294	130	75	33	424	108	
DISSENTERS:							
Baptists' Sunday School - - - - - -	- -	160	- -	80	—		
Dissenters - ditto - - - - - - -	- -	120	- -	30	- -	- -	Scriptural.
Ditto - - ditto - - - - - - -	- -	65	- -	9	- -	- -	- - Spelling, reading, Sacred poetry, writing, and Catechism.
Wesleyan - ditto - - - - - - -	-	120	- -	39	- -	- -	Reading; writing one evening in the week.
	none.	465*	none.	158	465	158	

TOTAL.

SCHOOLS. Number of Sunday Schools.	SCHOOLS. Number of Day Schools.	CHILDREN. At Sunday Schools.	CHILDREN. At Day Schools.	CHILDREN. Total Educated.	CHILDREN. Of whom are Hand-Loom Weavers' Children.
5	4	595	294 136	889	321
			430		

Population in 1831, 3,813, of whom 2,873 were in the town.

* Of these, 136 attend also at day-schools, probably dame-schools, including 36 who are children of hand-loom weavers.

Salisbury.

At SALISBURY, 12 men (earning about 9*s.* to 11*s.*), and 138 women (earning about 6*s.* per week), are employed in the silk-trade. The wages are low, but the work is constant, and no complaint is made..

About 15 men and 20 women or children weave hair-cloth of different sorts; the men receive 11*s.* when fully employed; women, from 3*s.* to 5*s.*; this trade is not constant. Salisbury flannels, 9 looms; linsey woolsey, 14 looms in the neighbouring parishes.

These two last are only the lingering remains of a once flourishing trade (employing perhaps 1,000 looms), which appears to have sunk away about the same time with the woollen cloth trade in other districts, viz. the year 1817 or 1818. No cause is assigned for the loss of the Salisbury flannel trade.* The

* I find by inquiries in London, that the article is now very little known or used; cottons are supposed to be substituted.

Report from Anthony Austin, Esq., on the South Western Parts of England.

The linsey woolsey is made by power-looms in the north. There is little spirit of enterprise here, as the following portion of the evidence will show: Question: "Why then have not power-looms been established in this town?"—Answer: "People are not in the way of machinery, and the trade had dwindled away before we were aware of the cause." In fact, it had dwindled away before power-looms came much into operation, and the loss of it ought, therefore, to be attributed to some other cause, which I have no means of ascertaining, but which I think may reasonably be attributed to the want of energy noticed above.

Wilton carpet weaving.

At WILTON there are two carpet factories employing 25 to 30 men, who earn good wages; their employer gave the men at one of the factories the option of having regular wages of 15*s.* a week in lieu of their piece-work; this they agreed to, but after a few months' trial they declined it, and returned to the piece-work at the present wages.

Prosperous situation of carpet weavers.

This sufficiently proves that they are not in a distressed situation. I gave them notice of my arrival, and appointed a time and place to see them; not one came. I, therefore, went to the factory, and there (under the direction of their employer, a gentleman who very kindly tendered his services in the investigation, either in his capacity of manufacturer, or in his office as a magistrate,) they answered the questions I put to them concerning their earnings; the sum and substance of this examination may be comprised in these words, "Make no complaints, they can rub on very well with that."

Cassimeres.

There is also a manfacture of woollen cassimeres, or fancy stripes, employing eight men as weavers. Each of these men has two, three, or more looms; there are 40 in all, but only eight are employed, and the sum earned at each loom is about 7*s.* per week; these men do not make good carpet weavers.

Out-door labour.

There were six factories and 200 looms at work on this article at Wilton 30 years ago. A few years after this period the trade began to fall off, and for the last 10 years only one person has carried it on. Lord Pembroke finds work about his park and farms for those of the parish who are deprived of their former occupations, and can undertake out-door labour; this has prevented the severe distress which otherwise would have been experienced. There are still some weavers thus employed as labourers.

Education.

The number of schools in this parish is four; one a free school, containing 20 boys; the three others are Sunday-schools; one of Established Church, attended by 134 children, of whom 88 are weavers children; two Sunday-schools for Dissenters, 85 children, eight of whom are weavers' children; 14 of the 85 attend day-schools, nine of whom are weavers' children.

Women weavers.

I visited Crediton, Chulmley, South Molton, Barnstaple, Torrington, Okehampton, Tavistock, Kingsbridge, Ashburton, Buckfast, Totness, and Exeter. The weavers of serges, at all these places, are (with very few exceptions *) women or girls, and their condition depends not so much on the profits of the loom, as on the industry and labour of the father of the family, who may be an agricultural labourer, mechanic, shopkeeper, &c., and therefore, as this was too wide a field for the limits of my appointment, I ascertained only the state of the trade at each place, and the average earnings of each loom.

Can earn 5*s.* to 6*s.* 3*d.* per week.

Whenever young women are employed who have no domestic occupations to interrupt their weaving, they finish two pieces, or two-and-a-half pieces in a week, for which they are paid 5*s.* to 6*s.* 3*d.*; some of these being orphans, or too old to be longer a burthen to their parents, are maintained only by the produce of the loom, and these persons are generally kept in constant employ, if the state of the trade will permit.

* These exceptions are old men who have pensions, or some other means of living, or else are, from their age, deemed proper objects of parish relief.

The returns from the poor-law unions, which follow, will show that their situation is not a prosperous one.

COUNTY OF DEVON.—Crediton Union.

STATEMENT of the Number of Hand-Loom Weavers, Agricultural Labourers, and other Persons, now receiving Relief in this Union; distinguishing the Able-bodied Hand-Loom Weavers from the Infirm.

NAME of THE PARISH.	Number of Hand-Loom Weavers receiving Relief this Day.			Number of Agricultural Labourers receiving Relief this Day.			Number of Persons of other Trades receiving Relief this day.			Total Number of Persons receiving Relief this Day.			HAND-LOOM WEAVERS.					
													Able-bodied.			Infirm.		
	Men.	Women.	Children.	Men.	Women.	Children.	Men.	Women.	Children.	Men.	Women.	Children.	Men.	Women.	Children.	Men.	Women.	Children.
Crediton	19	236	-	37	6	1	59	77	5	115	319	6	-	22	-	19	214	—
Cheriton Bishop	-	7	-	5	9	-	-	-	-	5	16	-	-	5	-	-	2	—
Colebrooke	-	14	-	9	8	-	3	1	-	12	23	-	-	2	-	-	12	—
Hittisleigh	-	4	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	4	-	-	2	-	-	2	—
Newton St. Cyres	1	2	-	11	31	-	1	11	-	13	44	-	-	-	-	1	2	—
Shobrooke	-	14	-	18	8	-	1	13	-	19	35	-	-	-	-	-	11	—
Brushford	-	2	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	4	5	1	-	2	—			
Bow	-	7	-	3	-	-	-	-	-	14	43	31	-	6	-	-	1	—
Clannaborough	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	3	4	-	2	—			
Chawleigh	-	6	-	8	-	-	5	-	-	19	30	43	-	6	—			
Coldridge	-	2	-	7	-	-	1	-	-	9	27	12	-	2	—			
Down St. Mary	1	6	-	5	-	-	-	-	-	8	15	21	-	5	-	1	1	—
Eggesford	-	-	-	3	-	-	-	-	-	3	4	—						
Lapford	-	11	-	11	-	-	1	-	-	14	23	18	-	9	-	-	2	—
Morchard Bishop	5	50	-	25	-	-	7	3	-	49	109	71	2	27	-	3	23	—
Nymet Rowland	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	3	—						
Wembworthy	-	4	-	7	-	-	-	1	-	9	14	9	-	2	-	-	2	—
Zeal Monachorum	-	4	-	4	-	-	1	-	-	21	41	38	-	4	—			
Cheriton Fitzpaine	-	-	-	5	-	-	2	-	-	38	26	58	—					
Kennerleigh	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	3	2	4	—					
Puddington	-	-	-	2	-	-	1	-	-	3	8	15	—					
Ponghill	-	-	-	3	-	-	-	-	-	3	10	14	—					
Sandford	2	21	-	12	-	-	3	-	-	62	96	72	-	8	-	2	13	—
Storkleigh English	-	-	-	3	2	-	-	-	-	3	9	12	—					
Storkleigh Pomeroy	-	-	-	5	-	-	-	-	-	9	5	16	—					
Thelbridge	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	3	10	5	—					
Upton Helliars	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	3	5	8	—					
Washford Pyne	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	—					
Woolfardisworthy	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	4	4	1	—					
	28	392	-	188	65	1	87	106	5	451	933	459	2	104	-	26	288	—
	420									1,843			106			314		

An active young woman of 15 years old can weave three or more pieces, when working in the improved looms, recently put up at some of the factories. The quantity which a manufacturer expects to get woven by all his out weavers, married and single together, does not (by any statement made to me) exceed one piece to each loom; and is, in general, reckoned considerably below this calculation.

The

The following extracts from the evidence will show this :

Report from Anthony Austin, Esq., on the South Western Parts of England.

"Has 230 weavers of serges, or thereabout; some live as far off as 18 miles (the work is sent to some central place for each district, so that the distance the weaver has to go rarely exceeds four or five miles); these 230 looms will not bring in 230 pieces a week."

Another manufacturer of serges says, "Before the termination of the East India Company's charter had from 800 to 1,000 weavers, all on serges; to get 500 pieces a week would require more than 700 weavers, because, being married women and having domestic occupations, they do not make a piece a week one with another."

Quantity done by 700 weavers.

The price for one piece varies from 2 *s.* 6 *d.* to 3 *s.*; a sufficient proof that serge weaving is not carried on as a trade, but merely as an auxiliary to the husband's, father's, or brother's means of support for his family.

Wages.

There is some little variation in the state of the trade in the different towns, which does not show itself in the towns themselves; few of the weavers reside in towns, but they are scattered over the whole country, in the cottages, villages and hamlets.

At Barnstaple, formerly a considerable place for weavers, not one is to be found, a few reside in the neighbourhood. The only manufacturer who makes yarn for the weavers assured me, that the poor preferred gathering sea-weed, and living on the shell-fish they picked up, to taking the wages of the loom, with its hard work and confinement.

Barnstaple.

At Torrington, they prefer the low wages (3*s.* 6 *d.* per week) obtained by sewing gloves.

Linen Weaving.

At Crediton, in Devonshire, in addition to the serge trade, which employs two or three old men, and a considerable number of women, there is a manufactory for sail-cloth, canvas, and other linen articles, recently introduced. The prices are low, but the work has been hitherto constant; and as provisions are cheap, the weavers, by hard work, can manage to live.

At Plymouth, the sail-cloth manufacture employs 58 looms. There was some little variation in the state of this trade in the years 1834–5, but at present the weavers obtain 11 *s.* to 12*s.* a week for men, and from 5 *s.* to 6 *s.* for women. There is but one factory in this town and neighbourhood.

Dorsetshire has 420 looms in the linen trade, principally sail-cloth.

Bridport is the chief seat of this manufacture, and there the prices are the highest. Strength is requisite for this sort of weaving; men who are not able-bodied cannot attempt it. The quantity generally woven by a man is two pieces a week. Some have great difficulty in accomplishing as much, whereas a few can reach to three pieces. The price, after all deductions, for two pieces is 12 *s.* 8 *d.*

Bridport. Quantity of work done by one man.

At Beaminster, and adjoining villages, 125 looms. The price here is 6 *d.* a piece lower than at Bridport; but as there is no lack of employment, as provisions are cheaper, and as the weavers, by living in the villages, have small gardens and stand at a lower rent, they are nearly on an equality with those of Bridport. The same may be said of Crewkerne, Yeovil, and Castle Cary. At this last place is a manufactory of hair-cloth for chairs, &c., employing 26 looms, and of chair webb, employing 12 looms. Except two, these are worked by women and girls, who can earn from 3*s.* to 6 *s.* a week. No change has taken place in the wages, or in the nature of the work for 30 years, and no particular distress is felt here.

Beaminster.

Castle Cary hair-cloth.

Linen Trade.—Evidence.

T. H., is a maker of sail cloth. His weavers do two pieces a week; the prices are for Nos. 1 and 2, 7*s.* 6*d.* a piece; Nos. 3 and 4, 7*s.*; No. 5, 6*s.* 6*d.*; No. 6, 6*s.*; No. 7, 6*s.* 6*d.* The weaver has to pay starching and quilling, and some provide their own looms, but not slay and harness; they work generally at their own houses, and some of them work for other masters.

Mr. *B.*, foreman. About 40 pieces in a year is an average quantity for one man to do.

J. S., manufacturer. A man can earn 13*s.* a week, and his wife 5 *s.*, without neglecting her domestic affairs.

13 *s.* gross.

J. M.,

	s.	d.
Gross - -	15	-
Deduct -	1	3
Net - -	13	9

J. M., weaver. Could do two pieces a week of No. 1, at 7*s.* 6*d.* a piece; has to pay out of it, starching and quilling 1*s.* a week, candles 3*d.* His wife earns 5*s.* a week at weaving.

R. C., weaver. Can do only 1 ½ piece a week; he works on Nos. 3 and 4. The price averages 6*s.* 7½*d.* the piece, equal to 9*s.* 11¼*d.* per week; deduct 1*s.* 3*d.* for starching, quilling, and candles, the net earnings will be 8*s.* 8¼*d.* per week; his wife quills for him. He works 13 hours a day, but is not so skilful a weaver as some.

Women, 5*s.* 8*s.* 8¼*d.*

Women on those numbers earn 6*s.* a week.

Women, 6*s.*

A custom prevails throughout this district, which is beneficial to the industrious labourer, either manufacturer or agriculturist. The farmers will let a quarter of an acre, more or less, according to the circumstances of the person applying for it; the land is prepared for planting; the rent is about 8 *l.* an acre. Most of the weavers at Bridport availed themselves of this, and thus were enabled to produce their great staple article of food, potatoes, at about 30 per cent. lower than the market price, and to add to it onions, parsnips,* and other vegetables.

Moral conduct and education.

The weavers in this district are a well-conducted, orderly, sober set of men: they have neither the leisure to cultivate, nor the pecuniary means of obtaining any intellectual pursuits, but are not unwilling to sacrifice a small portion of their very limited means of subsistence in order to bestow an education on their children, being generally sensible of the advantage they may hereafter derive from it.

A weaver at Bridport says, "He does not know if it is the practice of the weavers to send their children to school, but thinks, himself, that education is so essential that he makes what sacrifice he can to procure it for his children."

Another states, that "He sends his eldest child, who is five-and-a-half years old, to school at 3*d.* a week, but it is a great sacrifice to him."

Mechanics' Institutes.

There is a mechanics' institute at Bridport, but not one weaver belongs to it. I may say the same of every mechanics' institute, wherever situated, in the districts traversed by me. They all languish, and very few mechanics of any description take an interest in them.

The state of things just described has existed without much change for many years, and as no further investigation appeared needful (my time being limited), I did not attempt to collect statistical information.

I have, in a previous part of my report, given an account of the linen-ticking weaving at Mere, and the neighbouring towns and villages, which I need not now repeat.

Shepton Mallett silk trade. Power-looms.

Shepton Mallett has two or three considerable silk mills belonging to one firm, containing 132 power-looms (introduced about the year 1823). At the time of their introduction, 50 or more weavers (men) were thrown out of work; but the concurrent establishment of a lace factory, by a relation of the gentleman conducting the silk trade, found employment for them at that moment. This lace factory no longer exists, and where the men have since obtained work I was unable to learn. Some are said to have gone to Nottingham, some dead, some have taken to other sorts of labour. The power-looms are now worked by young women, who earn about 5*s.* a week. Crape is the article woven in these looms, the quantity which a power-loom can weave in a given period is double that which can be done by hand, and the cost in wages for an equal quantity, only half. It is evident that the hand-looms cannot come into competition with this. Two or three old men, in remembrance of their former services and good conduct, are still employed by the proprietors, at a loss to themselves.

Velvets.

Between 120 and 130 hand-looms were employed in velvets at the same factory, but the market price for this article having fallen, and the demand for it being reduced by the "American panic," the manufacturers were compelled to lower the wages 12 ½ per cent., and subsequently 5 per cent. more; finding this reduction insufficient to meet the competition, they preferred giving up the trade to the alternative of a third time lowering the wages. The distress

* Parsnips are considered a very desirable article of food, acting both as nourishment and as condiments to other more farinaceous diet.

distress of the weavers at this announcement is well described by the witness; as it tends to show the disposition of the weavers to earn their livelihood by their own labour, and their dread of being deprived of the power of so doing, I here insert the statement made to me by the gentleman referred to above: Report from Anthony Austin, Esq., on the South Western Parts of England.

"When Messrs. N. had announced to their velvet weavers, that in a month or two they should be obliged by the state of the trade to discontinue that part of their business, the weavers were in great tribulation, and frequently expressed a hope that some person would be found to undertake it. I had for myself no thought of entering into it; but seeing the distress of the weavers, I was led to consider the possibility of it, and consulted my friends on the subject. I then announced to the weavers, that I was about to take a journey to London, to bring to a conclusion some negotiations which I had entered into relative to this undertaking, and that on my return I would make known to them the result.

"The weavers having learned the day on which I was expected home, awaited in the street the arrival of the coach, and on my descending from it I was surrounded by a group of most anxious countenances; and never shall I forget the animated expression of joy by which they were lighted up when I declared my intention of making the trial; to the reduced terms they gladly acceded, and have never since murmured."

The earnings of men at these reduced prices do not exceed 10 *s.* a week, clear of all deductions; and women who are paid less wages, and cannot work so many hours, will not obtain more than 7 *s.* 3 *d.* In their evidence to me they say, that "They do not expect their condition to be better, they only hope it may not be worse. They are afraid that the trade will not remain there even at these wages." At this place woollen cloths and cassimeres were made in considerable quantities, but now there are only a few weavers, who are old men.

General Statement.

The weavers generally, as a body, are worse paid, taking into consideration the number of hours they work, the great strength and activity requisite for the more laborious sorts of weaving, the constant and unremitting attention, the quantity of manual dexterity and quickness of sight for all sorts, and the unavoidable damages their work is liable to, and for which they are responsible, than any other class of workmen. I can hardly except, from this sweeping observation, even the day labourer, from whom little is required save mere bodily strength. State and condition.

Under the most favourable circumstances, we may rate the weaver's weekly earnings at from 7 *s.* to 13 *s.* a week. A very few are able to obtain from 15 *s.* to 18 *s.*, or even 20 *s.*, working 14 hours a day. For more than 20 years, (ever since the passing of the corn law the weavers say,) these favourable circumstances have not occurred.

In the great clothing district of Somerset and Wilts, the trade has been gradually declining * since the year 1818, and the demand for labour has, in the same proportion, also diminished. The number of weavers is supposed to be less, but they have not decreased so fast as the demand for their labour has.

Where this is the case a competition necessarily arises among the labourers, and the immediate consequence is usually the reduction of wages; an effect, however, which has not been produced to any great extent in this district. An apparent anomaly, for which I will endeavour to account. Wages not reduced.

The fabric of woollen cloth, such as it was in the year 1818, admitted of great improvements; and every one who wears the article must be sensible of the alteration which has taken place in it.

In an over-stocked market the consumer, having a large choice, selects the best, and in the finer cloths, worn by the rich, quality has always been regarded more than price; the consequence of this is, that the great aim of the manufacturer of these cloths has been to excel his neighbour in quality, not to undersell him in price. The woollen felted cloth passes through many processes, each of which, Reasons for not reducing wages.

* The quantity made at different periods might be ascertained with accuracy by reference to the accounts of drawbacks allowed for soap used in the manufacture of the broadcloths and cassimeres; the exact number of yards of each sort is given in by the manufacturer. I have not access to these documents.

Report from Anthony Austin, Esq., on the South Western Parts of England.

which, if badly performed, will spoil the goods. Great skill, knowledge and attention on the part of the manufacturer, and of all his workmen, are absolutely necessary to ensure success.

The object, therefore, has been to stimulate the workmen by keeping up the price of the best work, rather than risk its deterioration by admitting the competition of the inferior workmen. I here quote the words of a gentleman lately retired from the manufacturing business:—"Good weavers are not in distress, but the work must now be done so well, to compete in the market, that the makers of fine work will not employ bad ones. As soon as sight begins to fail, a weaver can no longer do fine work; if from this or any other incapacity he is put off his fine work by his master, he goes to the lower makers, who employ him in coarse work, and pay him uncertain and low wages, or perhaps in truck. There are several such low makers in Frome, and some new ones setting up; is not aware that any manufacturer does directly pay in truck; but some of them manage it one way or other." There are some, principally among the smaller capitalists, who are driven to the necessity of reducing the wages, but the result is generally that inferior workmen go to them; that the article made does not enter into direct competition with the best; its tendency is to reduce the market price; but still the best cloth will always command a sale at a remunerating price, and therefore the object is always to make *good* rather than *cheap* cloth. It does not follow that the business is a profitable one; for the most skilful and attentive manufacturer cannot prevent a very considerable portion of the quantity he makes from being injured in some part of its progress, and this takes off from the profit on the perfect goods.

I think I have stated enough to show that the object is to get good work at a higher price, rather than inferior at any, and I will therefore not dwell longer on this point.

Endeavour of the capitalists to keep up wages.

Again, the aim of the capitalists has been to keep up the wages, perhaps with a view to prevent the competition of those of smaller capitals, who, not being able to purchase the new and improved machinery, could only meet them in the market by a reduction of wages, particularly those of the weaver, "which (to avail myself of the words of a gentleman of education and talent, conducting a large manufactory of superfine cloths and cassimeres) forms the largest item in the payments of the manufacturer, and to which his attention, when reduction is necessary, is always first attracted." This gentleman further states, "*As tradesmen we endeavour to get our work done as cheaply as possible, but as men we sometimes put this principle in abeyance.*" That this good feeling, which as "men induces us to put in abeyance that tradesmen-like self-interest which causes, and unfortunately, in some cases, renders necessary the "endeavour to get work done as low as possible," has existed and has operated hitherto to prevent the great reduction of wages, and has influenced many of the more considerable manufacturers of these districts, is corroborated by another witness, a manufacturer, whose wages have never been among the highest. He says, speaking of a strike which took place among the weavers, "The strike for equalizing wages was supported (if not caused) by the more considerable manufacturers of the county of Gloucester."

We have evidence of the same sort of feeling at Frome, in Somersetshire; it is stated by a weaver whose wife worked for one of the principal manufacturers there, who still gives the full prices, "that his wife was dismissed, because he (the husband) worked for another manufacturer at lower wages." They were not asked to take out work for this gentleman at lower wages, but dismissed for so doing in any case.

In the attempt to improve the quality an additional labour has been thrown upon the weaver, causing a diminution of his profits. This additional labour certainly exceeds the facilities which they derive from having better yarn produced for them by the improvements in the previous operations, and better looms and appurtenances; nevertheless very little complaint is made of the inadequacy of the wages.

Competition the cause of distress.

The competition, however, which arises from a diminished trade has its effects in producing great hardships. In the first place, weavers, even of the best class, are too numerous, and cannot be kept constantly supplied with work. A manufacturer carrying on a very extensive trade states, "If a weaver brings in on Tuesday, he may think himself lucky if he gets a chain on the following Monday."

There is but one day in the week for putting out work. I reckon 17 days

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an average time for a tolerable workman to weave a piece; if that 17 is made 23, the deduction is equal to 32 per cent.

If he wait till Monday week, not a very uncommon occurrence I believe, his wages will then spread over 31 days instead of 17, reducing them nearly 50 per cent.; during this time he gets no other employment, but is most probably walking from factory to factory seeking a chain, and in constant temptation of spending his money in beer (*see* page 427 of this Report); every day that they look out for work they get together and drink. In the next line I find, "A journeyman who can earn 10*s.* a week may, perhaps, play one week in four, and, if he have a large young family, is badly off," reducing his income to 7*s.* 6*d.* a week; this is but too frequently the case. In another place we have, "If they wait for a fortnight between bringing in a piece and taking out a chain, which they frequently do (and almost always a week), they most likely are keeping their looms going by work from different masters."

The part of the above sentence which comes within the absolute cognizance of the deponent (one of the principal manufacturers of Trowbridge) is true, and the weavers suffer by it. The latter part is only "most likely;" but the inference from all my evidence is, that it is not so, and that the weavers, taken as a body, are out of work one-third of their time, which reduces their income, of the master weaver (from one loom) to 8*s.* instead of 12*s.* per week, of the journeymen to 7*s.* instead of 10*s.*

They work for several manufacturers, and the one knows not how much or how little they get from the other employer.

It is the custom also to let a master weaver have work for several looms; if he have six looms he will, at times when for the moment there is a demand for the article, say that he has four looms vacant, and only two employed by his other master; he will say this to each of them, and thus he gets eight chains for six looms, the extra two he puts out to a less fortunate, less skilful, or less favoured weaver, at a much lower price.

On this point I will quote from the evidence of a very intelligent person, who, in his own words, "had been in the woollen trade all his life; is a weaver; has occasionally acted as foreman, to superintend the weavers' work for the same master he works for now." I may add to this, that his master had recommended him to me as a person on whose evidence I might place reliance. He states, "The shortness of work in Frome gives rise to this evil, that some foremen of the manufacturers who have looms of their own, keep their journeymen constantly employed, and thus other master weavers cannot get above half work. Instances have been known of master weavers who, not being able to get a chain, have taken one from these favoured workmen, and have woven it on their own loom at journeymen's wages, thus indirectly lowering the price of weaving."

The witness assigned a cause why one person was permitted to have so many looms, which, though not relevant to this branch of the subject, I will introduce here. The practice is not sufficiently prevalent to induce me to make a separate article on the subject. "This giving of several looms' work to one person has partly arisen from the circumstance of this borough returning a Member to Parliament; it is done to create votes." I pointed out to the witness, that this was beneficial to the weavers, for they were then represented in Parliament. The answer was, "No, they are misrepresented; they do not vote according to their conscience." At Westbury, which returns a Member also, this method of making votes is not adopted; it may be only accidental here.

This system of giving so much work to one person has a tendency to lower wages, and it is almost surprising to find that the wages have not undergone a great *general* reduction. As a still further corroboration of the statement I have made, that the capitalists have refrained in an extraordinary degree from lowering wages, I refer to a question asked at a general attendance of weavers, viz. "How is it that one person will pay 1*s.* per yard when he knows that his neighbour is giving 9*d.*?" Some one in the crowd answered, "because he has a conscience." The answer of the witness under examination was not to the purpose, and no *tradesman-like* reason was assigned. We may, therefore, presume that some better motive, viz. "the conscience," was the cause.

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But though the reduction of wages has not been general, several manufacturers have availed themselves of the competition among the weavers; have given out their work at a very low rate, and have, without making themselves directly amenable to the consequences of infringing the law against "truck," managed to pay their workmen in goods, by an indirect process.

There is a considerable number of the weavers who do not earn 5*s.* a week at the loom, and have very little assistance from their wives and children. It will be seen by referring to the subjoined Table, that only 131 of 1,736 persons are employed in factory work, and only 121 persons out of 1,736 in 355 weavers' families at any other occupations; and that the total of the earnings of these does not amount to more that 32*l.* 18*s.* 2*d.* per week, to be divided among the whole number of persons, equal to 1¾*d.* per head per week for factory work; 2½*d.* per head per week for other employments; and 4½*d.* per week for all occupations. The assistance derived from this source is, therefore, not great. The factory law has an injurious effect in this particular.

STATEMENT made by 357 Families of the Number of Persons belonging to said Families who are employed in Factories (not Weavers), or at any other Occupation, and of the Earnings of such Persons in the Factories or other Occupations respectively.

FAMILIES.	PLACE.	Number of Persons.	Persons.		Earnings of Persons.	
			Working in Factories.	Working at other Occupations.	Working in Factories.	Working at other Occupations.
					£. s. d.	£. s. d.
22	Twerton - -	97	16	19	2 8 4	4 12 -
149	Frome - - -	721	59	4	7 - -	- 11 -
11	Road - - -	58	none	3	- - -	- 6 1
24	Berkley - - -	127	1	9	- 15 -	2 5 -
6	Heytesbury - -	24	7	1	- 10 -	- 9 -
38	Westbury - -	176	1	19	- 2 -	1 15 3
37	Trowbridge - -	198	6	21	- 9 -	3 2 -
36	Hilperton - -	181	1	24	- 1 6	3 19 3
17	Chippenham - -	86	31	6	1 17 -	- 14 6
15	Calne - - -	68	9	15	- 13 9	1 9 6
355		1,736	131	125	13 14 7	19 3 7

Three hundred and fifty-five families, containing 1,736 persons, of whom 131 work in factories at some employment (not weaving), and earn 13*l.* 14*s.* 7*d.*; this divided among the whole number of persons gives only 1¾*d.* per head per week, or for each family 8½*d.*

The number of persons working at other occupations, *i.e.* not connected with the factory, is 125, and their earnings amount to 19*l.* 3*s.* 7*d.*÷1,764=2½*d.* per head per week, or for each family 1*s.*

The joint earnings in factory, and at other occupations, will, therefore, amount to 4¼*d.* per head per week, or 1*s.* 8¼*d.* for each family.

The earnings of those working in hand-looms, in the places above-named, will be found to average 6*s.* 4*d.* per week for each loom; the total number of weavers is 541, of whom 401 earn only 7*s.* a week at the loom, and 275 of these 401 earn under 5*s.* a week each.

Irregularity of the supply of work.

Those who earn so little, and receive but a scanty assistance (or perhaps none) from their wives and children, and must consequently suffer great privations, do not regularly get 5*s.* for each week, but will, perhaps, earn 2*l.* in a fortnight, and nothing for six weeks after. The mode of earning 2*l.* in two weeks is this: where two in a family can weave, and have only one loom's work, one person will work all night and the other all day. This injures them in many ways. The employer finds his work done in a short time, and thinks his wages still too high; he never asks "why?" and is not told. Working by night consumes extra candles and fire, and takes off from the weaver's profit; the cloth is, most probably, not so well made as if wove by one person throughout, by a better light than that of a candle.

During

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During the time that the weaver has no work on his loom he incurs debts, a part of which he pays off when his earnings are as above stated,* but he is rarely in advance of the world, few are ever in a situation to save in good times, to provide for adversity; those who trust them are generally losers, and sell to them perhaps as much from charity as profit.

He must consequently (if he do pay) pay dear for all he consumes; he must take just such bad or indifferent articles as they will let him have; he is therefore badly fed and at a dear rate.

This is a sad demoralizing state of things, but it is true and even extensively so.

Referring to the evidence of a person † deputed by me to go from house to house to inspect personally the condition of the weavers, and to obtain from each family a statement of income and expenditure, I find that, "in the 74 houses he has visited to procure this statement, there is great distress. In some of them he was told they had not a bit of bread, nor a potato in the house, and he believes this to be true."

To sum up, I should say that one-third of the whole number were in a worse situation than the agricultural labourer in amount of income, one-third on a par in that respect, but without the advantages of cheap rent, occasional food and fuel, and a settled habit of life, arising from greater regularity in his wages and employment; the remainder are in tolerably good circumstances ‡.

The weavers are indignant at the idea of being put on a level with the agricultural labourer, as the following paragraph, which I extract from an address in writing presented to me by them, signed by several in behalf of the whole body of weavers, shows. (*See* their address, given at length at page 456.)

The following evidence shows the wages paid to some other branches of the trade:—

T. F., foreman, says, "that the billy-spinners average 18 *s.* a week."

W. W. says, "the man at the mule has 18 *s.* a week."

T. F. says, "the millman has 1 *l.* a week, and the roughers from 15 *s.* to 23 *s.*"

A manufacturer at Chippenham states, "that spinners earn from 15 *s.* to 20 *s.* a week; mule-spinners from 20 *s.* to 25 *s.*; millmen and roughers, 12 *s.* to 15 *s.*; and the foremen of the roughers 30 *s.*, of the millmen 20 *s.*"

Difficulty of ascertaining the pecuniary condition of the weavers.

In the foregoing pages, I have endeavoured to lay before you, Gentlemen, the pecuniary situation of the weavers in the great clothing district of Somerset and Wilts. I have found great difficulty in getting accurate information, for many reasons:—

Causes of that difficulty.

1st. Where there is no union, only individual cases have been presented to me, and I have found no one capable of giving an account of the general condition.

2dly. Sometimes the most influential manufacturers have declined giving me the benefit of their knowledge and experience, by which I might correct the statements of the weavers themselves; from others, I have received every possible assistance, but they have professed to have no knowledge of any but their own workmen, and have denied the existence of any distress; others admit a partial distress.

3dly. Where the weaver works for several masters, neither of them has a knowledge of his circumstances, nor any interest in his fate.

The

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* This debt is frequently never repaid.

† This person was considered by those manufacturers who knew him, and by the weavers also, to be a very competent and proper person for the purpose.

‡ That they also are worse paid than other branches of the trade is acknowledged by all; a manufacturer states, "they are generally, and were in better times, a poor class of people, and the adults in other branches of the manufacture are better paid than the weavers."

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The great and primary cause of distress is, the want of sufficient trade to give employment to all. If we can find a remedy for this, the consequent evils will at once be removed, competition will cease, wages will rise, and still the profits of the capitalist will increase.

Cause of distress. Remedy proposed.

The only resource generally suggested is a repeal, or at least a modification, of the corn law. The opinion is, that the consequence of the repeal of this law would be, not the lowering of wages, nor even a reduction of the price of corn, in any great degree, below an average price of 60*s.*, but that the demand for manufacturing labour would increase without lessening that for agricultural; that the same quantity of manufactured goods would be exchanged directly or indirectly for bread-corn grown at home, and consequently the same quantity be grown and consumed, and that, in addition (were the exchange allowed even at the price of 60*s.*, by the repeal of the said law, or modification of it, by imposition of a fixed moderate duty), a larger quantity of manufactured articles would be exchanged for foreign corn, which would feed those who made them; the price of corn would rise in the countries which are our competitors in manufactures, and with it the price of labour. If we remained stationary, we should be better able to cope with them than we are now.

The weavers have little reason to complain in this district of the reduction of wages, because the great body of them still receive the same nominal wages that they had 20 years ago, or nearly so, and they are contented with them; therefore, Mr. Fielden's Bill is scarcely known either to employer or employed. Nor did I find any one prepared to speak to the probable effect of such a measure.* One of the weavers at Collumpton, as will be seen by the annexed statement, proposed that prices should be regulated by the Legislature, but could give no answer as to the mode, and therefore no evidence is recorded.

I here give the only statement in which this subject is alluded to; I give it at full length and verbatim; it attributes the distress to two causes, viz. the corn law, and the repeal of the prohibition to export English wool. The notice of Mr. Fielden's Bill is very casual, and I believe originated in their having read the book of instructions with which I was furnished for circulation among them.† This address, together with the one which follows it, are from individual weavers of serges at Collumpton, where a combination has existed for so long a period. (*See* page 410 of this Report.) They are curious as specimens of an orthography nearly correct, and of a very considerable degree of reflection and intelligence.

Address of the weavers of Cullumpton.

"I, *J. M.*, of Cullumpton, am a weaver, at which trade I served a regular apprenticeship; since that time, I have followed the same occupation for the space of —— years. I have —— children, —— of which I am bringing up to the same calling. My own earning, as near as I can state, upon an average, amounts to from 7*s.*, or from that to 7*s.* 6*d.* per week; I work in a broad lumb, of which there are about 70 in the town, and, in my opinion, the most skilful and best instructed part of the trade work in them. I have worked in a narrow lumb in years past. Wages both in broad and narrow lumbs, since the year 1816, has undergone many and serious changes, all of which has had a tendency to diminish wages; some by taking off a great part of the real price which usualy used to be paid, and some by increasing and augmenting the quantity of material for the same or less price then aforetime paid. Many may be the evils which may be enumerated that has given cause to the many reductions which from time to time has followed in rapid succession; and my firm belief is, that the introduction of the corn law system has been highly injurious in fettering and restricting the woollen manufactory in finding vent in the foreign market. First, England, being a nation of artizans, we can in no shape require the vaust quantity of manufactor'd goods which the operatives of our large manufactoring districts are constantly turning out; and secondly, the very limited space of country in which we live in, which consequently cannot produce a sufficient quantity of corn, which the superabundant quantity of our population stand in need of. Thirdly and lastly, it is quite obvious that the foreigner, living in a more spacious and extensive tract of country, has from time immemorial ever been wont to direct

Corn-laws.

* The wages paid by the principal manufacturers being still good in this (the woollen cloth) district, the attention of the weavers has not been called to a measure whose sole tendency is to prevent their reduction.

† The manufacturers are all adverse to such a measure.

direct there attention to the growth of corn, knowing at the same time that England could ever boast of the superiority and advantage which they possest in reference to there superior wools; it therefore necessarily follows, had not the legislator interfered, and enacted such measures in the year 1815, in restricting foreign grain finding its way to our English markets, we should now to this day more or less have enjoy'd the privilege of bartering and exchanging the surplus of our manufactor'd fabrications for the over and above quantity of corn which the foreigner, by living in such an extensive tract of country, could in nowise consume. There may be other reasons stated, such as the exportation of our English wool, which in my humble opinion is nothing more or less but handing over to the foreigner a rod to inflict punishment upon our own backs."

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Exportation of long wool.

"I, *W. X.*, of Collumpton, weaver, have taken into consideration the principal causes of the depression of our trade, and we believe that it is owing to many and different causes, attributable to two legislative enactments.

"1st. To existing corn laws, in not allowing a trade for our manufactur'd goods, by a fair barter, being made between ourselves and other countries; enabling the English merchant to dispose of his articles in the foreign market, so as to be enabled to pay himself and those employ'd under him. Ever since the existence of those laws we find our foreign trade decreasing, and why? the foreigner, not being able to procure ready cash (or rather specie), cannott purchase at our markets, and they have in consequence of which attempted making the articles themselves. The second cause is the exportation of our grown wools, for it would be utterly impossible for the foreigner, considering every advantage they may possess, both as regards their machinery, their artists and mechanics, to manufacture their goods without our long wools grown in England; so that we think could the Legislature take that subject into consideration, and exact something to restrict the foreigner from the use of our long wools in particular, we feel persuaded they would, under all circumstances, be compelled to have recourse to our markets again, which inevitably would enliven our markets, and in a great degree ameliorate the condition of the English artisan. In consequence of not having a foreign trade, particularly so in this part of the country, we are compelled to have recourse to the Government orders, and what was issued by the East India Company during its existence, which orders were all taken by tender, and the master whose estimates are lowest has the orders given him, and in order to make the goods he is compell'd oftentimes to reduce his wages, and particularly on the weaving branch; and could Mr. Fielding's observations be made a law of, with respect to the wages being determined, either for three or six months, it would very materially put a stop to reducing our wages, as it would not be possible for any alteration to take place in less than the time specified.

Mr. Fielding's Bill.

"But in order to make an inference on those remarks above stated, we try to lay before you our present condition, as contrasted with our condition previous to the passing of the corn laws and exportation of our grown wools. When we were employed in foreign manufactures, we could earn a tolerably good livelihood; and we have reason also to believe our masters have, as well as ourselves, felt the baneful influence of the present legislative Acts now in operation. We may positively say our wages is reduc'd one-third from what we could earn at the period above referred to. Since now the baneful working of the corn-law bill, it has driven away the greater part of those rates by which we could earn a good livelihood."

"Collumpton, 27 September 1838."

Address of the Weavers of Trowbridge.

"As facts are stubborn things, let us try to find out a few, out of the many that are existing, which have a tendency to make the poor weaver poorer; and, in order to do so, let us go back to the years 1810, 1811, and 1812, and onward for several years. At that time, 42 yards, 2,280 threads, 42 inches, 360 skeins of shoot; at the present, 42 yards, 2,480 threads, 46 inches, 570 skeins of shoot; making a difference of 200 threads more, 4 inches wider, and 210 skeins more shoot. Now the 210 skeins of shoot will reach more than 38 miles, consequently the shuttle must travel that immense distance in order to complete one piece of 42 yards in length; another fact is, the labour required to thrash in that shoot is trying indeed, causing extra time to be lost in beeting or mending the threads.

Address of the weavers of Trowbridge, literatim.

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And, in consequence of the cloth going through a different process, we are liable to double, and often to treble, damages to what we were at the time abovementioned. Another fact is, the warping-bar ought not to be more than 12 feet 4 inches round, which is now near 13 feet, which will make on an average two yards more for the workman to do, and all this extra labour, which makes it near double to what it was at the abovementioned periods.

"Another fact is, the fancy kerseys are constantly changing, and scarce two pieces alike for the same loom; in consequence of which there is more time to be lost, more expense, and liable to a host of damages; so that, after all, the wages is far below that of the plain work.

"And, as to the state of trade for two years past, it has been no better than at the present time. We shall now show the present state of trade, by showing the total number of looms in the parishes of Broughton, Bradley, Southwick, Studley, Hilperton, and Hilperton Marsh, Bromham and Trowbridge; the looms that are at work, and those out of work or idle:—

Total amount of looms in the above-mentioned parishes are - - -	1,623	
	928	in work.
	695	out of work.
	233	more at work than not at work.

"If these 695 looms were all employed, each loom earning 8 *s.* per week, it would amount to 14,456 *l.* per annum.

"2d. The causes of the condition are owing chiefly to the trade being in an unprotected state, as was not the case formerly; that is, the work being chiefly put out to the people's own houses for 10 miles round, hence it follows that whole families, boys and girls, are initiated gradually from their infancy into the trade; adding to this, great quantities of agricultary families are also initiated into the trade in consequence of the distress in and among the agriculturing labourers. The trade not being protected, weavers whole families, or any others, may learn the trade without any lawful apprenticeship, hence it appears to us to be the first great floodgates to the depression to the trade, because the market for labourers are more productive than the market of labour. Hence it follows that the weavers are at the mercies of their masters, and while one set of men are at the mercies of another it must be bad, and will be while human nature are so depraved. Another cause why many are suffering in the trade is owing to the monopoly among the weavers, and is encouraged by the masters; hence it is, while some are keeping 6, 8, 10 or 12 looms whilst others, *equally as good weavers*, are not able to keep on one loom; hence it appears to us to be the chief causes of all the rest of the evils that have crept into the trade. By removing these causes the effects would soon gradually cease, *without intervening on the part of the Government as to the amount of wages between master and workman.*

Clause referred to at page 51.

"Much might be said as to the many gross abuses which exist, but having already said remove the causes and the effects will cease, that is, to make them in a certain measure independent in the trade, and they would correct abuses among themselves; and, we believe, if Government would make it into a law that no one should work at the trade under 15 years of age, or those who have served seven years, or should serve apprenticeship, and that no person should keep more than four looms.*

Clause referred to at page 47.

"Nor can we think any person in their right mind who would try to put us on a level with out-door labourers, though by-the-bye we do not envy them, only we wish their wages was more; nevertheless, they have many privileges which a weaver has not; first, they are at less rent, they have gardens, which is a great help to their families; they are not confined within doors like weavers, nor do they work so many hours in the day, nor are they liable to damages like weavers; they have not a thousandth part so much on their minds, but can go to their labour whistling and singing all the day, if they are in a merry mood.

"Just contrast that with what a weaver has to mind with 3,000 threads, and as many eyes for those threads to go through, and from 600 to 800 reeds, more or less, according to the pattern, and hundreds of cords over head and under

* Neither by manufacturer nor undertaker. [In the original letter.]

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under his feet, and sometimes obliged to count every shoot; these things considered, a weaver ought to be rated amongst the first rate of mechanics in the country.

"It is very often the case, as at the present time, that the best hands are out of employ, and themselves and families on the parish, because the men before alluded to, that have six or eight looms, can get the work done at a cheaper rate by boys and girls, at so much per week; and we are persuaded that if these things were duly considered by our Government, and regulated by a law,* we should soon reap the benefit, and our poorhouses would soon lose some of their inmates.

"Here follows an estimate of the quantity of work that could be done when the chain was ready to begin, and in order the better to come as near the truth as possible, we have divided them into three classes:—

	Yards.		s.	d.
An able-bodied man, say 30 years of age, working 12 hours per day, could weave	2 ½	at 8d.	1	8
From 40 to 50 years	2	—	1	4
From 50 and upwards	1 ¾	—	1	2
Average of the three, 1s. 4 ½ d.			4	2

liable to a variety of damages, but it is utterly impossible to say to what amount."

[The names of the different manufacturers, and the prices given by each, with accusations against some of paying in truck, are here inserted; but I think it my duty not to publish them. If they are really guilty of this offence against the law, a complaint should be made to the magistrates, and evidence brought forward to substantiate it.]

"If 2 ½ d. be taken from 8 ¼ d.† it will leave the undertaker 5 ¾ d. per yard, and when a journeyman is paid out of that pittance at the rate of 8 ½ d. out of 1s., 42 yards, at 5 ¾ d. per yard, is 1l. 0s. 1 ½ d., the journeyman will have for his share 14s. 11 ½ d. This being taken in cloth, he must take it to a good market to make 10s. of the cloth, for which he has been weaving 42 yards, making in the whole 2 ¾ d. per yard, and 4 ½ d. over, for five or six hours time to sell the cloth. These are some of the evils that are now, and have for many years, existed in the trade to which it is our misery to belong.

(signed) By the Committee, in behalf of the whole."

There are 21 signatures to this paper, 19 of which are written in a legible hand. Two put a ×, the mark of, &c.

Boards of Trade.

Boards of trade would either be injurious or nugatory.

If the regulations could be enforced, and all possibility of evading them provided against, the price of the article must necessarily be increased, and the consumption of it diminished; you therefore give the weaver five per cent. or 20 per cent. more wages, and if the consumption be diminished in the same ratio, he would have 20 per cent. less work, and be no better off. An injury would be inflicted on the consuming portion of the community, and on the operatives in the other branches of the manufacture, without benefiting the weaver.

But in reality the law would be evaded, as the law of truck is, both parties to the evasion consenting, and there being no third party who could or would prove the fact. This is stated by a manufacturer in Gloucestershire, and he adds, that when the weavers had, by combination, in the year 1828, fixed the price, he had numerous applications for work, with offers to take it at a very reduced rate, and could have got all his work done at that reduction. I refer to the letter at page 50. The weavers there state, that if protection is given to the trade, that is, if the number of weavers is reduced, by excluding all who have not served an apprenticeship of six or seven years, and limiting the number of

* That no one should work more than 12 hours per day. [Original note.]

† This 8 ¼ d. is an average taken from the prices of all the makers, but as no distinction is made of the articles manufactured at each price, nor of the time required to make them, and as these prices and qualities are various, the conclusion drawn from these statements is fallacious. *A. A.*

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of apprentices to be taken, they will need no interference of the legislature to regulate prices between master and workman.

It is true, that this is asking for legislative trammels which would be as impolitic in an enlarged view of the subject as a direct interference with wages, but they would not so easily be evaded. It recognises the principle, however, that *prices depend upon the proportion between supply of labour and the demand for it*. Here only it is that we can look for a remedy with any hope of success; we cannot diminish the supply of labour, not even by emigration, to any sensible extent. Can we increase the demand for it? The general answer is, Yes! by the repeal of the corn laws. This is the universal panacea. A few speak of the Cash Payments Resumption Bill as having been one of the causes of a diminished trade, but all seem sensible of the injustice which would be done by a repeal, or even modification of that law. Boards of trade are not among the remedies relied on, or even looked to for relief.

Exportation of long wool.

On the subject of the Exportation of English Long Wool mentioned in these addresses, I give at p. 470 the answers to some questions put by me to a manufacturer who had made a statement similar to that of the weavers, and it would appear by those answers, that the exportation of English long wool, if at all injurious, is only so to the makers of serges or long ells in Devonshire; and that the foreign wool imported duty free is cheaper than our own, and is much used. Other makers of serges in a very extensive way of business stated nearly the same thing, viz., that receiving the foreign long wool duty free was a compensation for any loss sustained by importing English wool, except, perhaps, to the serge-maker. It further appears, that our long wool goes to France for the manufacture of finer articles, but not for the purpose of making long ells. The exportation may raise the price of wool, and so oblige the manufacturer to reduce the wages of his work-people in order to render the article in a foreign market sufficiently low to compete with the same, or nearly similar goods made abroad; but it is probable, as stated before, that the introduction of foreign wool free of duty is at least an equivalent.

The other remedies proposed were, 1st., a law of apprenticeship, and 2d., an interdiction to having more than two broad or three narrow looms in the possession of one master (such laws once existed): the Act of 2 & 3 Philip & Mary, c. 11; "Forasmuch as the weavers of this realm have complained that the rich and wealthy clothiers have oppressed them, first, some by setting up and keeping in their houses divers looms, and keeping and maintaining them by journeymen and persons unskilful, to the decay of a great number of artificers brought up in the said science of weaving; and secondly, some by letting them out at such unreasonable rents as the poor artificers are not able to maintain themselves, much less their wives and families. Thirdly, some by giving much less wages and hire than in times past they did, whereby they are enforced utterly to forsake their art and occupation wherein they had been brought up. Therefore, &c., &c., no clothier shall possess more than one loom, and no master weaver more than two looms; no master weaver shall take more than two apprentices, none shall be a weaver but who has been an apprentice."

Extract from the Act 2 & 3 Philip and Mary, c. 11.

This Act was repealed in 1809, 49 Geo. 3, c. 109.

And 3dly. That weavers should not be allowed to work more than 12 hours a day.

Such remedies as these are so contrary to the principles of political economy, and militate so completely against the system of free trade, which, when they propose the repeal of the corn laws, they are themselves advocating, that I scarcely need make any further comment on them.

Fraudulent Warping Bars.

Fraudulent warping bars.

Wherever a specific accusation of false measure was made, and I had the opportunity of verifying it, I found (except in one instance in Mr. Miles's district) that there was no foundation for the charge; and indeed the general answer to interrogations on that point was, that "no fault was found with the measure," consequently no legislation is at present needed on that point. In fact, the length of the bar in the woollen trade was, and I believe still is, regulated by Act of Parliament, viz. 13 Geo. 1, c. 23; the long bar, three yards three inches (which is called two ells); the round bar, four yards four inches; thrums, 18 inches. I cannot find that this Act has been repealed; the weaver has therefore his remedy at law. Part of this Act was repealed by 49 Geo. 3, c. 109, but not that part relating to warping bars.

Extract from 13 Geo. 1, c. 23.

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Stamps on Indentures.

Not having found one single instance of a boy or girl bound by indenture as an apprentice to the weaving trade, the stamp can in no other way affect the weavers as a class than so far as it operates in preventing their admission to other trades, and no one has mentioned it as among the grievances. The premium required in most profitable arts or trades so far exceeds the means of the poor weaver, that the reduction of the stamp duty would give him no facility of disposing of his children at other trades, even were a stamped indenture requisite; but except as a protection from press for the navy, and ballot for the militia, an indenture is so useless an article, that few parents desire to have it for their children, and therefore the cost is of little moment. The masters know full well that if it gives them power by law, it is difficult to enforce that power, and that an unwilling and law-bound slave can and does injure more than he serves them, and that the constant mental harassment of keeping in order an unruly apprentice is too great for endurance. "Le jeu ne vaut pas la chandelle," we therefore see few indentures. I have endeavoured to ascertain how many 1 *l.* stamps for indentures are sold in a year, but there is, I believe, no such return among the Parliamentary papers.

Combinations and Strikes

Have not been frequent in this district,* nor has their effect been very important on the state of trade. The weavers have rarely gained their object; but, on the contrary, have spent the little money which they had previously saved. The following quotations from the evidence of different manufacturers are not out of place here:—

At Frome, a gentleman employing 300 looms states, that "some years ago his partners and he insisted upon their work-people (weavers and others) putting aside a portion of their wages, and most of them had laid up a pretty little nest-egg against bad times; a strike took place, and all this fund was withdrawn. This might be 12 years ago." "Eight, nine, or ten years ago the manufacturers proposed to lower the wages; the weavers struck, and combined together to support each other, and then were obliged to come in on worse terms than those originally proposed." A manufacturer states, "that all his workmen struck for wages in the year 1829, and remained out nine weeks; in the meantime the mules had been ordered, and the spinners were gradually discharged; 40 were dismissed, and suffered a good deal of distress in consequence." In another manufacturing town, viz. Bradford, it is stated that "there has been no combination which has affected the state or condition of the weaver." Again, "The combination which was made against us two or three years ago has in no way affected the trade."

The only instance of successful combination which has come under my observation has been noticed in my Report, when mentioning the state of the serge trade at Collumpton.

The strikes, however, do not appear to be more than a slight incidental cause of the distress which a considerable portion of the weavers experience.

Shop looms.

A custom is becoming general in some parts of the country, of putting up what are technically called "shop looms," *i. e.* looms set up by the manufacturer in his own buildings; the weavers in these looms work as journeymen at journeymen's wages. Those who have looms of their own, and have been accustomed to think their trade a separate and independent one, and to have journeymen under them, are indignant at this, and have held back as long as possible from entering into the factory looms; but as, unfortunately for them in the present state of trade, a sufficient number of hands were to be found, those who held back are no longer employed, except when there is more work than can be woven on the manufacturer's own looms.

This system of not supplying the master weavers, unless the others have more than they can do, is not rigidly acted on, or they would probably not obtain work at all, but they are in several instances "very badly off."

The

* By this district I mean the four counties of Somerset, Wilts, Devon, and Dorset.

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The system of shop looms has its advantages and disadvantages. 1st, Advantages: the master knows the nature of the work he has on his looms, and he knows how many hours the men work, and the quantity they ought to do; he regulates his wages accordingly; the cloth is better made. The workman being a part of the establishment, his master takes an interest in his moral and pecuniary welfare, makes him put aside money for sickness when he is earning good wages, sees to the education of his children, &c., and would only, in case of absolute necessity, lower those wages below the point which will enable a man to live by his earnings. The men have better looms and tackle, and the best work, and by associating with each other become more intelligent.

On the other hand, by getting together they are apt, if not closely watched, to become more immoral, one bad one corrupts the many; but on the whole, though the old weavers look upon it as one cause of their ruin, the man who weaves the cloth will, as a general rule, be benefited by it. In the transfer of the work, from the old master weaver to the journeyman, some distress has been created.*

The Allotment System.

The system of letting small portions of land as gardens, commonly called allotments, is not much in operation in this district; it was tried some time ago at Frome, and failed of producing the relief expected from it. The causes of this failure appear to be twofold. 1st. The man who has been bred to weaving is seldom acquainted with the management of land; he will overcrop it perhaps, or manure it at wrong seasons, or not manure it at all. His succession of vegetables will be injudicious, and the produce consequently not repay the labour, or, 2dly, as stated in the evidence of a gentleman at Wellington, allotments of land are "made here, but the advantage is questionable, *the comber and weaver are too tender to bear out-door labour.*" Another cause of failure may be found in the following evidence: "The allotment of land made to the poor did not answer the purpose for which it was originally intended, many of those who rented it neglected it when they got a little work, some would not or could not pay their rent, and he conceives a feeling to have existed that, as this was a charitable donation, the individuals concerned in it would never think of enforcing payment from the objects of their charity; that acting on this idea they made no exertions to save sufficient money to pay their rent. The land was fine grass land allowed to be dug up for the purpose."

The weavers give a different account of this, they state "that it was bad land, that a great deal of labour was bestowed upon it, and plenty of manure was taken to it; this continued three years, and then, because a few did not pay their rent, it was taken from all." One witness goes on to say, that "it was taken away because some gentleman wanted it, and a fine crop he had off it."

It appears by both accounts that the rent was not paid. The gentlemen who rented the land for the purpose of letting it out in portions, with the permission of the nobleman whose property it was, found themselves in arrear, and the system was abandoned. The quantity was 31 acres, which at the average rate of one-sixth of an acre to a family, might have been, if properly managed, serviceable to 186 families, or at the rate of five to a family, 930 individuals.

The mode of letting land which appears to succeed best is mentioned at page 448 of this Report, when speaking of Dorsetshire; the same method has been tried also at Frome, and is said to be of great use, and not liable to the evils appertaining to the other system. The gentleman who furnished the above-quoted information relative to the allotment system added, "He believes that if land, well manured, were let to such poor persons as were willing to take it for one summer's crop of potatoes at twice the rent paid under the allotment system, viz. 1 *s.* instead of 6*d.* a lug (or perch), many would be found to take it, and, not conceiving it to be an act of charity, but a mere business-like contract, would pay the rent, and would derive much profit and assistance from it. As far as land can be found this taking prevails, and answers the purpose. The labourers (manufacturing and others) would take more if they could get it."

In this case the only operations are planting, hoeing and digging; the land is

* This is more especially the case in Gloucestershire, it does not much apply to this particular district.

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is prepared for them by the farmer, and they need work only in fine weather at these very simple mechanical operations; in fact, their possession of the land lasts only during the fine part of the year, from April to October. I have stated that this method of letting land is extensively acted on in the county of Dorset, and also in the extreme western parts of Wiltshire, where the linen trade is carried on. The weavers there are a much more hardy set of men than the woollen cloth weavers, or at any rate more accustomed to out-door work, some of them having in fact been husbandmen before they were put into the loom, and most of them preferring to leave their weaving at harvest-time for the labours of the field, where their services are required by the farmer. The following extract is from the evidence of a manufacturer of ticking at Mere, who employs 300 looms or more: "Almost all the weavers are employed occasionally at other things; if a labourer is wanted by a farmer, or by a villager to work in his garden, a weaver is applied to. There are few who do not assist at harvest, and many have their own potatoe digging to do in the garden which they rent; in short, the weavers are made quite job-men here." A weaver in the same district says, "Cannot tell how many pieces he wove in a year, for he prefers going out in summer and autumn to harvest-work; perhaps he did not earn more at that, but he preferred it; would stay in his loom if his work was wanted, or if his master insisted on it." An instance occurs of this union of the agricultural and manufacturing operations at Totness in Devonshire, among the blanket weavers: "Has six looms unemployed; the weavers who worked in them have got farming work; all his weavers, except one, were husbandmen, whom he has taught to weave, and therefore, in the intervals when work is slack, they get agricultural labour. The farmers are ready to employ them, because they are the most respectable and steady of his men; they are so, because he could select from a great number of applicants, and chose only men of good character. One of his weavers was offered constant work by a farmer at the usual wages [from 7*s.* to 8*s.* a week there], consulted him, and he advised that he should accept of the offer, because, as his wife had serge weaving, if one trade failed the other would be a resource; he would have 'two strings to his bow.'"

This combination of the two occupations can only be effective in large agricultural districts, where the population is not sufficiently great to require a specific division of labour. But the mode of letting small portions of land for a summer's crop might be suitable and beneficial to even the least hardy constitutions of men employed almost wholly in the sedentary in-door occupation of weaving.

The Factory Law

Is complained of as partial in its operation and injurious in its effects, both to the manufacturer and the labourer. Its partiality is shown by its different degrees of stringency on employments which are said not to differ in their effects on the health of the children.

The manufactures of woollen cloth and of serge are, in none of their processes, more injurious than is that of lace or of bobbinnet by machinery and power, neither are they more injurious than silk-throwing; yet the latter is subject to a different regulation by the law, and the former is quite exempt from its operation; indeed, it could never be effectually subjected to its influence. The work required of the children is principally filling the brasses, which, though more conveniently done in the factory, could be performed (and would be so if the hours were limited) in the homes of the parents, after the hours of work in the mill were over. No one will imagine that the cheerless hearth of the cottage is a better, a more comfortable place of confinement to labour than the large, open, well-warmed or well-ventilated rooms of the factories. In a case like this, no limit could be put to the number of hours a poor child may be employed. Its parent, who directly profits by its labour, would not be found a less merciless task-master than the manufacturer, on whose conduct the watchful eyes of his workmen and of the public in general are always fixed. This law is still more partial, by exempting all factories where no water or steam-power is used; yet there are occupations more destructive of the health, where very young children are condemned to work from early in the morning till late at night, standing on the cold damp ground, with one side of the shed open to the wind, and without a spark of fire to warm them.

The occupation of turning the wheel for the spinners of hempen or flaxen yarn used for making nets and other purposes, is said to be of this description.

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One of the witnesses, a weaver, expresses himself in the following words on this subject: "Children of seven years old can begin to turn the wheel to spin flax, which is very hard work, and they are kept at work from five in the morning till nine at night in summer, at the rate of from 1*s.* 3*d.* to 1*s.* 9*d.* a week; that I might notice the number of weak and crooked-legged children in the town, an evil which was attributable to this sort of work." The same remark was made by some gentlemen who attended to give evidence.

Many are of opinion that it is injurious to the manufacturer, to the work-people, and to the children themselves. I think it right, therefore, to state the evidence received. A manufacturer at Frome says, "He considers that the factory law is a great injury to the weaver; it is beginning at the wrong end; they should give parents the means of educating their children before they compel them to keep them at home; if they were worked to death before, they are starved to death now, and worse used at home than they would be in the factory; if they earned money, part of it might be spent on their education." Another very eminent manufacturer states, that "He did attend more to the education of his people formerly, when young children were employed in the factory, and they were better educated then than now. There is a silk-mill in Frome, and young children can get some employment there, otherwise they would run wild through the streets; their parents gaining nothing by them, could not afford to educate them."

I will only add two more quotations on this subject: first, "Since the passing of the factory law some system of education is needful, because the means of educating the younger children is in some measure taken away from the parents. Employs no children under 13 years of age in his factory."

The following is from the letter of a large capitalist engaged in the serge trade: "The Factory Act is one of the most partial (exempting lace mills), and the greatest curse, alike to the humbler as to the richer classes, that was ever framed by any legislature, and so I will prove to any unbiassed reasonable man."

Great objection is made to the system of "espionnage" which is thus established (none to the mode in which the gentlemen appointed have performed their unpleasant duty), but an inspector is as obnoxious as an exciseman. It is also stated, that it is in the power of workmen to subject their masters, against their will and without their knowledge, to the penalties of the Act.

That the poor children need protection is admitted and is undeniable, but it seems to be doubtful whether the present law affords it to them, or whether their situation is not worse than it was before the passing of this Act.

Moral Condition and Conduct.

Regarding the moral condition and conduct of the weavers in all the districts I have visited, I think I may venture to say that they are quite on a par with any class of work-people; that they are not perhaps the most intelligent and well-informed, because their work generally is performed in their own houses, and keeps them from associating much with their fellow men, and profiting by others' knowledge and experience, is perhaps true. A manufacturer who employed a considerable number states, "I consider them dull and of no physical energy."

In another quarter, I hear that they are industrious, sober and religious; and again from other manufacturers, "A weaver when he has got work will keep at it 15, 16 or 17 hours a day; his own weavers would do so if he would let them; they are a set of hard-working men, and earn their money "dearly." "I should say that they were industrious, &c." A licensed victualler residing in a manufacturing village does not think that the weavers spend much money in drink, &c. "The weavers are not a drinking set." Thinks that the weavers in moral and religious conduct, in temperance, frugality and prudence, are quite equal to any other class, and in honesty also." A weaver says, "He has not been to meeting on Sunday for twelve months, has been on a week-day; goes in his working clothes on a week-day, must have better clothes for going on Sunday.* Again, a manufacturer states, "The weavers are generally a well-conducted moral set of men; he believes that they are worse paid

* Showing a desire to attend to his religious duties.

paid than any branch of the trade, and they work harder." Some of the witnesses do not speak so well of them, but by far the greater proportion of the evidence is in their favour.

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On the Subject of Education.

Education.

It is not easy to form any correct judgment of the proportion who cannot read, but perhaps I shall not be wide of the mark when I set it down as one-fourth of the whole number. Those who can read, but not write, may amount to one-half of the remaining three-fourths.

Among those who were examined by me, I have only found one who expressed a wish to be able to get books to read: he added, that he generally "read for an hour between leaving off work and bed-time." The weavers themselves generally profess a desire to give the best education to their children which their means will permit. It is scarcely possible to get them to say, with any sincerity, what sacrifices they would make for the purpose of obtaining this desideratum. I do not think that there are many who would send a child to a daily school, if they could get work for it at a factory or elsewhere.

One instance of a rather more enlightened and liberal feeling than that which is prevalent among the labouring classes on this subject, may be quoted here in the words of the witness (a carpet weaver). "Has four children, they all go to daily schools, dame schools. They are not old enough yet to work in the factory, but if they were, he would rather that they should get an education than earn a trifle a week; at present they only learn to read. There is a school at 6*d.* a week, where they could learn to write also. There is no national school in Wilton, one is wanted. Would not object to a school to which they were compelled by law to send two out of four of their children, even at a charge of 3*d.* a week; cannot speak for other people on that subject."

If the child earns 1*s.* 6*d.* a week by working in a factory, the parents cannot afford to lose the profit of his labour; and without this profit, derived from those children who are old enough to obtain it, they have not the means to pay for the education of the younger.

Thus they only get the means of educating some of their children, by placing others in a situation which almost precludes the possibility of their having it, except at night, or at Sunday schools.

After a hard day's work, the child is scarcely capable of undergoing the additional fatigue of mental exertion, and the parent is unwilling to force him.

The Sunday schools are well attended.

The factory schools established by the Act, are very serviceable where they are well attended to by the manufacturer; but many of the factories are without them, for the manufacturer prefers having no child under 13 years of age, to having the inconvenience, risk, and responsibility of the school. They express dislike to having this forced upon them, the consequence is, that the children who might be employed, "run wild about the streets."

As I have stated before, the means of education are diminished by this very law that was intended to promote it.

The spirit of improvement has gone forth and the eyes of the public are open to the advantage, which the community will derive in a social, as well as in a commercial point of view, from the diffusion of knowledge.

In every town, village, and hamlet, attempts are made to establish schools. In some places these efforts are rendered abortive by want of unity among those who have the means of effecting the object, and much remains to be done.

No one can doubt that national provision for the instruction of the poor is "a consummation devoutly to be wished," but I have not been fortunate enough to find any one who could give me an opinion as to a practicable mode of carrying a general plan into effect. The first obstacle is religion; the second obstacle, the hardship of an interference with the personal liberty of the subject, so far as to compel the father of a family to deprive himself and his children of the advantage to be derived from their labour; the third obstacle would be the difficulty of obtaining clothing decent enough for the poorer child to associate with others better off than himself, with sundry minor inconveniences of providing food for the child attending a school at a distance from its parent's house, &c. &c.

Difference of religion: that this is an effectual barrier to any national system of education which would meet with the encouragement and attention essential

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Evidence.

to its well-working, appears to be the opinion of all those with whom I have conversed on the subject.

I subjoin the sentiments of a clergyman who is highly esteemed in his parish for his acquirements, his generally liberal way of thinking, his urbanity, kind-heartedness, and attention to the welfare of his parishioners.

"As to additional means of instruction, I conceive it to be self-evident that a country which professes to have an established religion is guilty of 'felo de se,' if it does not provide for the education of the whole of the poor, according to the principles of that religion. As the want of instruction is felt, the Establishment will be blamed for the omission of that which it has not the means of supplying; irregular instruction will be substituted, hostility will be engendered, and the whole thing will go to pieces; it will then be attempted to introduce a system of compromise, in which truth will be necessarily sacrificed."

On the other hand, quoting from a letter written by a dissenting minister, the number of whose congregation (of which I judge by the return of his Sunday school children) testifies to the esteem in which he is held. I find "in this parish there are a great many day schools, with a large attendance, as well as the Sunday schools. The people in general are very adverse to government or national mode of instruction. More schools are being set on foot in this place, in aid of which there is a great willingness in the minds of the people to contribute.*"

Again, I quote the opinion of a gentleman who has interested himself much in the affairs of the labouring population, particularly the manufacturers in the parish where he resides, and spares no efforts to improve their moral condition. "The great bar to all good education and feeling is, that the people are dissenting and the clergyman is of another persuasion."

How are these objections to be overcome?

If I might be allowed to offer an opinion, I should suggest that the following plan might be found useful, viz. that Government should, on a fund being raised by any persons to a certain specified amount (but a very small one), give annually twice the sum so raised, as long as the said fund should continue to exceed the minimum to be established by the law; that no interference of the executive Government should take place in the mode of conducting these schools further than needful to see that efficient masters and mistresses were appointed; that no creed which militated against Christianity was taught; that the private contributions continued, and that the whole fund was applied to the use of the school. The Establishment would not have to complain that funds were not provided for the education of the "whole of the poor, according to its discipline," for the Church must be poor indeed, if it could not furnish one-third of the funds needful for such a purpose; the Government providing the other two-thirds to any extent. Such a plan would never be *sanctioned* by the Establishment; but I doubt if it would meet with that direct hostility which the attempt to unite in one school persons professing various modes of worship has encountered, and I fear will still encounter. Such schools being established, would the poorer classes of working men send their children to them? The influence which the rich possess over their poorer neighbours would have great weight in this respect; but there are some difficulties which those who most needed the assistance would have to cope with, before they could avail themselves of it; their poverty depriving them of the ability to clothe their children is one obstacle. Unless the schools were numerous, the distance many would have to go would be also found a great impediment. Parents do not like to send their children through the wet and cold, having to sit for hours perhaps in a cold and windy school-room.

The first difficulty might be removed, by providing a suit of clothes for each child out of the school-fund; this must be subject to sundry restrictions; it must in no case become the property of the child or its parents, but must be peremptorily restored at the end of each year, when a new suit is to be given, and the old one must be burned or otherwise destroyed, not given away or allowed to be used elsewhere, to prevent sundry abuses which would arise were it otherwise disposed of; *the acceptance of it renders the parent subject to a penalty for not sending the child to school as regularly as its health would permit.*

If

* Many small schools would be much more useful than one large one.

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If no attendance for a certain number of days without good or sufficient cause, the name to be struck off the books, and the clothes restored. The clothes so provided should be uniform throughout the kingdom at every school, and no mark of distinction peculiar to any establishment to be on any account permitted.* It should not be fantastical, but vary with the prevailing mode.

It would be too tedious to enter into a detail of the reasons for giving clothes, and for uniformity therein, but I think that they will be sufficiently obvious.

The second minor objection, viz. distance, is of considerable importance, and could only be obviated by having many small instead of one large school. At the present moment, there is scarcely a parish without a sufficient means of education for all the children at a small charge; but the schools, being situated in the town or most important village, are not (in large parishes) accessible to one-third of the inhabitants. Many of the hamlets have no place of instruction, save the old-fashioned dame-schools; the consequence is, that the children are sent to the nearest school, even at a higher charge for inferior instruction, rather than to a better school farther off. A very intelligent silk-weaver, the mother of a family, who had been the daughter of a farmer, had received an education rather better than her situation in life usually requires, stated that "her children go to dame-schools at 2*d.* a week; there is a national school at 1 *d.* a week, but it is farther off, and they do not allow any sewing to be done for the benefit of the parents."

Why should this latter objection exist?

The village of Bratton, in the parish of Westbury, is (among many others) thus situated: The minister of a dissenting congregation there says, "I have resided in the hamlet 12 years, and know of nothing which would afford me more pleasure than the establishment of a day-school which would be open to all classes. I have no doubt but many of the parents would willingly pay according to their ability. The British school at Westbury is at too great a distance, else many of the parents would have availed themselves of its advantages."†

I am not aware that education is more wanted by the weaver, or would be of more service to him than to other classes of work-people; but as the weavers are very numerous, and certainly, as a body, very poor, whatever was of service to the poor generally, might perhaps be said to be partaken of most largely by them.

The advantages derived from Normal schools is very marked and decided. The regularity, the discipline, the attainments, and, I may add, the cheerfulness of the children, is generally evident where they have had the advantage of a master or mistress who has previously received the appropriate preparatory education which such establishments are calculated to impart; the latter quality (cheerfulness) is much promoted by the introduction of vocal music. I may mention here, in illustration, the British school at Tavistock, which I was induced to visit from the following statement, given in answer to my queries:

"There is a British school well managed, where 150 to 160 boys are educated, and an equal number of girls in an adjoining room. The master and mistress are both very clever, and I judge that they are kind also, because the children delight to go there. The master's name is Smith; he came from the Borough-road (Normal) school."

I found that this statement of the cleverness of the master was fully borne out by the acquirements of the boys, and his kindness by their cheerful countenances and ready obedience; they sang several songs in very good time and tune, and were examined before me, not by individuals selected for the purpose, but by classes, in mental arithmetic, in geography, and the geography of history, climate, &c., their answers were ready and correct. In order to ascertain how far this was actual well-grounded knowledge, or mere words "learned by heart," as it is called, I made them explain every technical term used in their answers, and found them quite competent to do so. The writing, not

* Marks of pre-eminence in moral conduct and in acquirements should be given, but these should be the same in all schools.

† A daily school has been established since by the Dissenters.

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not only of one, but of a very considerable number whose books I examined, was very good. The girls school appeared to be equally well managed. I heard them sing, and saw their needle-work, but am not competent to decide on its goodness; they were neatly dressed, and appeared cheerful, attentive and industrious. This is by no means the only well-conducted school which I visited, but upon the whole I think the best. The introduction of vocal music seems to add spirit and cheerfulness to the generally dull and monotonous work of school tuition.

Embezzlement.

Where a valuable material is placed in possession of a man who is actually at times devoid even of a sufficiency of food to satisfy the cravings of nature, and who has the additional anguish of seeing those about him for whose sufferings he feels more than for his own pining for want, it requires no small degree of honesty to resist the temptation of converting a part of the property entrusted to his care to his own use. He has the additional temptation of knowing how easy it generally is to dispose of it, and how extremely difficult in most instances it is to detect the abstraction of a small quantity of this valuable material. There are other causes which sometimes almost drive a weaver to the commission of the crime. The manufacturer gives out a certain quantity of shoot which he thinks requisite to make a firm cloth; "the weaver would not or could not put so much abb (or shoot) into the cloth; he did not dare to bring it (the abb) back, and possibly sold it." * Under such circumstances as I have described, there can be little doubt but that some embezzlement takes place. "Embezzlement is carried on among the weavers who live at a distance; cannot say to what extent, but the cloth is injured by it, and the profit consequently lessened." Another manufacturer: "Does not know of any embezzlement; there is embezzlement, but not to any extent to injure the trade by the competition of the sellers of such goods in the market." A manufacturer, who is also a magistrate: "No commitments for embezzlements have taken place for some years past; is not aware of any going on, though probably it may be so, but not to an extent to affect the trade."

Evidence.

A magistrate, who is also a manufacturer: "No cases of embezzlement have come before the bench for some years past."

The above evidence relates to the woollen trade.

In the serge trade, the evidence of one manufacturer mentions that embezzlement exists, and that he is injured by it, in the loss of sale of the article, but it does not appear that it is to any great extent: this evidence is too long to quote.

In the sail-cloth trade: "Suspects that there may be embezzlement occasionally, but there have been no convictions." Again, a magistrate, who is also a manufacturer: "There is not any embezzlement to signify, and no commitments for that offence."

In the silk trade: "This does give a facility to embezzlement; has reason to know that there is not much embezzlement, it is certainly quite possible to abstract (without immediate detection) half a yard from the end of a piece, but he does not think that it is done here," &c. &c.

The difficulty of conviction is great, and with a due regard to the liberty of the subject it must be so; but as every manufacturer who pays due attention to his work will detect embezzlement with almost a moral certainty of being right, though perfectly unable to bring any legal proof, he can (and they do) prevent its being carried on to any extent, for now that employment is scarce and weavers superabundant, the certainty of dismissal of a suspected individual, which is tantamount to sending him to the workhouse, will operate as an almost effectual preventive.

Power-looms,

Power-looms.

as applicable to the woollen trade, have been so much improved in their construction of late, that it appears they may be applied with some probability of advantage on the part of the manufacturer to the weaving of fine or second sort of cloths or cassimeres.

In the quality of the article woven by power-looms, or by a good weaver in a hand-loom, there is but little difference. The quantity produced is also very little

* This statement is made by a manufacturer.

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little in favour of the power-loom; but as women and boys, or even girls of 16 years, possess the skill needful to superintend the webb on the power-loom, and as the strength and regularity (the other needful qualities for a weaver) are supplied by the machine, and as the wages with which women will be contented are so much lower than those which are deemed sufficient for a man, it is more than probable that, on the introduction of power-looms, the thousand or more men who are now employed in the district I have visited will no longer be required.

There is a great reluctance on the part of the manufacturers generally to introduce power-looms, but it always happens that some one is bold enough to make the experiment, regardless of its consequences as they affect the workman; others must necessarily follow his example, if any advantage is obtained by it. This introduction of any new machinery takes place gradually, because the person obtaining the advantage is careful it shall not be known, and the weaver or other who would be thrown out of work by the introduction of the machine has (for a different reason) the same interest in concealing the advantages. One manufacturer, who has erected several power-looms, stated that Mr. —— (in Huddersfield) calculates, that "he can get a piece of 42 ells, equal, to 63 yards, which now costs by hand 63 *s.*, woven by power-loom for 20*s.*" In another part of the same evidence, "He does not think that power-looms will be introduced to any great extent, because there is a surplus population, and therefore the price of hand-loom weaving will come down so as to render the power-looms unnecessary." This would reduce the actual wages below 5 *s.* a week, not allowing for any contingencies, such as damages, fluctuations of trade, weather, &c. Power-looms would have been introduced long ago but for consideration for the weavers. "They are in this district far behind the Yorkshire people, but a consideration for their work-people makes them unwilling to introduce power-looms, or anything which would throw them out of employ. Blankets are made by power-looms in Yorkshire, but not in any part of this district. Power-looms are in action on sail-cloth in the neighbourhood of London and at Stockton-on-Tees, though not yet used here." It appears by evidence, "that a woman can, with the power-loom, do twice as much as a man can in a hand-loom."* The attention of the manufacturers of the West is directed anxiously towards them, they were tried in the serge trade in Devonshire, but not found to answer, in fact, the work being already done by women at very low wages, the power-loom would only be of service when a greater quantity of the article was required than could be done by hand. Power-looms are extensively used in the silk trade at Ottery St. Mary, in Devonshire, but the proprietor refused to give me any account of them; they are also used in the same trade at Shepton Mallet. I have given an account of them at p. 38 of this report.

It must appear from the perusal of the above, and of the rest of the evidence regarding power-looms, that the distress which now exists among the weavers in the great clothing district of Wilts and Somerset, though not at present attributable to power-looms, will probably soon be much aggravated by the effect of a more general introduction of this machine.

It may be presumed that the manufacturers will introduce them gradually and cautiously to avoid depriving many men of employment at a time; but when this generation of weavers has passed away, women only will find employment.† There will be no weavers as a class; the work (as in Devonshire) will be done by the wives of agricultural labourers or different mechanics, and the weaving will no longer give a designation to the race. I can hardly venture to say how far this will benefit the country at large, or how far the males, which by this change will be free to take up other occupations, can find profitable employment. Agriculture does not want them, nor does any existing trade or occupation.

Possibly, if we could exchange a larger quantity of our manufactures for such raw produce as we need, and which new countries have to give us, a larger production and the employment of more hands might be the consequence. Some new inventions may spring up, which will for a time employ the rising generation, and it is to be hoped that this will be the case; but with an increasing population

* This is in the silk trade; in the woollen trade the quantity is not much greater.

† A few men will always be required for the superintendence of the power-looms and for preparing the chain, turning it on, and keeping it in order.

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population and a decreasing (or not proportionably increasing) trade, some alteration of our system appears to be expedient. The only one which presents itself is the admission of the raw produce of other countries on much better terms than at present. An opinion that it is the only remedy is very prevalent, and the experiment (granting it only to be an experiment) might perhaps be made without danger. It will signify little, if a large number of men be unemployed, whether they were previously agriculturists or manufacturers, they must be maintained by the land, and their maintenance will reduce the income of the land-owner: supposing, therefore, that a modification of the corn law would have the effect of lowering rent, it would on the other hand lower the poor-rates proportionably (and here, by a scale of duties, we have the power of graduating and determining the quantity it should be lowered), it would be a much more satisfactory way of lessening their income to give employment, and consequent contentment and loyalty to the million, than to lessen the income by maintaining them in idleness and discontent in a poorhouse.

If the modification of the corn laws be not practicable, it may perhaps be advisable to get rid of the surplus population by

Emigration.

Few of the ill-employed class on whose condition I am now making my report, have availed themselves of the opportunities which the Government have afforded for this purpose. They are by no means (I am speaking of the woollen cloth districts) adapted for that sort of life; they are the sons, grandsons, and great grandsons of weavers, and are little fitted for any other occupation. Those to whom I have proposed it as a remedy have scouted the idea; "however hard their fate, they prefer to live and die in old England, but wish that trade was better." This was said by general acclamation at different meetings, without one dissentient voice.

But if the weavers are unwilling to expatriate themselves, there are no doubt many others who would gladly do so, and their removal would make room for the children of weavers, who must otherwise be brought up to the loom.

One of the best informed and most intelligent of the gentlemen who gave evidence on the subject stated his opinion to be, "that, locally, emigration might be beneficial, but as a general principle it is like bleeding a person, only a temporary expedient."

As this temporary expedient may be frequently resorted to, there is no reason why it should not be had recourse to as often and as largely as the state of the country requires, accompanied with other measures, whose tendency may be to prevent the too rapid increase of the population, could any such be devised.

The expense of sending out a large number of individuals is, I believe, frequently urged as an objection; we ought, however, to set against it the advantages (almost incalculable) which a country derives from converting useless consumers of the produce of other people's labour into useful producers of articles which may be exchanged with mutual benefit to themselves and the mother country, and of a surplus available for the support of as many of a superior class as are needful for the civil and military government of the colony.

Truck

Is certainly one of the causes of distress in this district; or it may rather be said to be the effect of that distress which arises out of want of sufficient trade, and of the consequent competition for work. Its evils are not very extensively felt in the districts I visited, the proportion of looms whose occupants receive a part of their wages in goods, may be, from the best information I could obtain, about one in ten, certainly not more, and as the articles made on those looms are all of an inferior quality, they do not much interfere with the trade in the finer and better description of cloths and cassimeres.

The extent to which it is carried on, however, sufficiently proves that the present law is inadequate to put down the practice; it is easily evaded. The manufacturer has (where the market for labour is overstocked) the power of selecting such workmen as he thinks proper; it will very soon be discovered, or he may take care to have it communicated by indirect means, that he will employ only such persons as spend the money they get for their labour at a certain shop in which the said manufacturer has an interest; even this interest may be so covert and indirect as to be incapable of cognizance by law.

One of the most palpable cases which came before me, and the only one which was corroborated, if not fully established, by the admission of a party concerned

concerned in it, is the following; I quote the words of the deponent: "Gets 1 *l.* 6*s.* 4*d.* for weaving a piece of cloth which it takes him three weeks to finish, equal to 8*s.* 9⅓*d.* per week, but is expected to lay out the money at his master's son's shop, or else would not get any more work. He played five weeks, and in that time ran in debt at other shops; and when he again got a piece of work was obliged to pay his debts with the money he received for it [therefore he had none to spend at the son's shop, who, it seems, does not give credit], he cannot consequently show a ticket, and has been refused a chain. This is also the case with other weavers. The things he gets at the shop are as good and as cheap as elsewhere; they can have what they like, and almost every thing is sold there. Has been out of work since Monday last, and does not expect to get another chain, because he has not a ticket to show; is not obliged to take cloth."

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Another case against the same party was represented to me in these words: "Has seven or eight miles to go for his work; his wages are low enough, and to make the matter worse he is paid only 6*s.* in money, the rest he is obliged to take in goods. He may choose whatever he likes generally, if they sell them at the shop, but he thinks that they are dearer than they could get them elsewhere. He is obliged sometimes to take cloth: one piece of cloth he was charged 8*s.* for, he sold for 5*s.*, to buy food and other necessaries with."

This latter charge I could neither verify nor disprove without being the cause of the poor man's losing his work; it is made against the same individual who is admitted by a party concerned to require of his work-people that they should spend their money at his son's shop, and is, therefore, in its main points true. It differs, however, from the other witness's statement in two things, viz. the dearness of the things sold at the shop, and the being obliged to take cloth.

If the weaver is asked why he does not endeavour to put a stop to the practice, he answers "that the law against truck is not sufficiently severe; if the penalty were 500 *l.* a stop might be put to the evil."

It may be doubtful even if so heavy a penalty would be effectual; both parties are consenting, one to get "half a loaf, which is better than no bread;" the other, for the sake of meeting competition in the market. Neither could exist without this indirect or else a direct lowering of wages, and therefore no information is likely to be laid by the only party who could prove it, viz. the workman himself, except in moments of vindictiveness, when the desire of revenge overcomes the dictates of prudence. While our trade is inadequate to employ our population, so long will truck, or some mode of reducing the price of labour equally injurious to the labourer, be acted on. This brings me to the subject of

Foreign Competition.

The evidence on this subject induces me to believe that a necessity exists of placing our trade with countries beyond sea on a better footing than it at present stands, or those who now are employed in making the 30,000,000 *l.** value of manufactured woollens, cottons, linens and silks exported, may soon become a burthen instead of a blessing to their country. In all parts of the world most strenuous efforts are making to drive us from the field. The cessation of wars on the Continent of Europe has caused a vast increase of population, and has given a security to the capitalist. This increased population and capital cannot be advantageously employed in extending their agriculture, because they are not allowed to exchange its produce for our manufactures; they must, therefore, necessarily turn their attention to other objects, and it will be seen by the evidence which I am about to quote that they have so done.

"Foreign cloth is cheaper than British, but as yet not equal in fabrique. They are making prodigious strides in improvement. When the skill of the foreign manufacturers becomes more perfect, and their capital more than sufficient for their own trade, we shall find them successful competitors in every open market in the world. This applies to Verviers, Aix-la-Chapelle, Elberfield, Silesia, especially in the neighbourhood of Goerlitz; to Berlin and its vicinity, and to all Saxony. They have water-power (the cheapest) to any extent in the mountainous parts of Prussia, Silesia and Saxony, and there would be no scarcity of labour. Having visited Prussia this year, I can speak up to the present moment as to the advance of manufacturing skill and power in Prussia and

Evidence.

* I have put an indefinite and uncertain sum here, but as far as I can judge by the tables of exports which I have access to, it is much below the real amount.

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and Saxony; so much increased too are the native buyers of wools in the public German fairs, that they now take a lead, and the English buyers are only known as secondary purchasers. Ten years since, when I first visited the German fairs, the native buyers were scarcely known or felt."

When questioned also about the American market, the answer runs thus:

"We cannot expect to retain the American market when the skill of the foreigner becomes more perfect."

The above is the information given by a gentleman of large capital engaged in the manufacture of superfine cloth, who frequently visits Germany for the purpose of buying wool. He attributes this great progress of the foreigners to the protecting duties laid by them on the articles which they manufacture, in consequence of our prohibitory system as regards their corn.

In serges, the foreign manufacturer is said to be able to undersell us, not only in the other markets of Europe, but also in our own. Referring to the written statements made by the weavers of Collumpton, I find "they are informed that goods manufactured abroad from English wool are brought into this market, and can enter into competition with ours, even at the present low rate of wages."

This power to undersell us in serges is partly attributed to the exportation of our long wool; this has been noticed at page 458 of this Report. The part of the letter which I now wish to refer to is that relating to wages and provisions abroad, and the assertion, that in a short period they will on the Continent manufacture serges 25 per cent. cheaper than we can. The interchange of long wools does not appear to be so much the cause of this as does the cheapness of provisions, and consequent low rate of wages.

Sir, Collumpton, 22 Oct. 1838.

In answer to yours of the 10th instant, I hand you the information as far as I am enabled.

Questions put by Letter to Mr. ————

Question 1.—Do we not use as much foreign long wool as we export English?

We certainly use more foreign long wool than we export.

2.—And at as low a price?

In many cases foreign long wool is better and cheaper.

3.—Have foreigners no access to the same market for this foreign wool?

Most assuredly, foreigners have much easier access to their own wool than we have.

4.—Do we not import wool fit for your purpose from those very States which manufacture your article?

The wool is not so well adapted as English wool for the articles manufactured in Devonshire.

5.—And does our wool certainly go there?

Our long wool is exported to France for the manufacture of finer articles.

6 & 7.—What is the proportion of the value of the wool in the article to that of the labour?

The labour is about one-third, and the wool two-thirds.

8.—What is the expense of transporting it to that country which competes with you?

The cost of transport would be about two per cent.

9.—What will be the difference in the price of wages, allowing for all our facilities of machinery; and what is the average cost for actual manual labour on a piece?

Wages are less abroad and provisions cheaper, and taxation considerably less. We have from these causes already lost a good part of our trade, and are still losing it daily; they will in a very short period manufacture articles on the Continent 25 per cent. less than in England, as they have water-power, and every facility in improved machinery.

On this point (the price at which foreign serges could be sold in our markets) I made inquiries in the London market, and found that some woollens nearly resembling the serges had been sent from France; but not being quite so good, were not able to supplant the Devonshire manufacture, and that

as

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as yet the experiment had not been repeated; but I cannot help observing that this shows how near we stand to the brink of a precipice, and how slight a thing may send us over. It may be worth the consideration of our Government whether even a slight relaxation of the present corn laws might not avail to save us from the impending ruin.

I have also endeavoured to ascertain how far the facts stated in the evidence are confirmed by official documents, but in this research I have been met by difficulties which I believe are insurmountable. In order to ascertain the effect which the passing of the corn law *may* have had on our foreign trade, it would be necessary to compare a period previous to the passing of that law with a corresponding number of years as near to the present time as possible, due allowance being made in the comparison for the increase of population. I have been unable to do this: the tables of returns published by order of the Government do not go back farther than the year 1820, as regards woollen or worsted goods, to which my evidence relates. In Mr. Porter's "Progress of the Nation," the earliest date is 1815; I am informed that no returns of an antecedent date are forthcoming, and that the destruction of custom-house documents by the fire prevents the possibility of obtaining them. 1815 was a year, I believe, "sui generis," from the peculiar political position of Europe: some perhaps imagined that peace must bring us unlimited trade; others, more wisely, that it would bring low prices; the one party manufactured and sent out goods in anticipation of realising great profits, the latter sent out *stocks* of goods in hopes of selling before the low prices occurred, and the exports may have been much greater than in preceding years; if, however, we are permitted to take this year as a standard of the period preceding the passing of the corn law, and compare the succeeding era with it, the account will stand thus. The Table is for a period from 1815 to 1834, both inclusive.

	Declared Value.
Total export of woollens in 1815	£. 9,381,426
Average of the succeeding 19 years	5,949,220
Falling off	£. 3,432,206

If we compare the export of 1815 with that of 1834, we have:

1815	£. 9,381,426
1834	5,736,870
A still larger deficiency	£. 3,644,556

Again, if the export of 1834 is compared with that of the average of years from 1816 to 1834, we have:

Average as above	£. 5,949,220
Export of 1834	5,736,870
Less than the average of the 19 preceding years by	£. 212,350

It may be objected that 1834, which I take as being the last of the series, is less than 1833; we will take the average of years from 1825 to 1834, including both years, and compare it with 1815, and also with the average of the 19 years; the result will stand thus:

	Declared Value.
1815	£. 9,381,426
Average from 1825 to 1834, 10 years	5,304,010
Less than 1815 by	£. 4,077,416
Average of 19 succeeding years	£. 5,949,220
Average of 6 last years of series	5,304,010
	£. 645,210

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In every case a falling off in the foreign trade as regards woollens generally. If I confine myself to broad cloths and cassimeres, we shall find :

	Pieces.
Amount of broad cloths exported in 1815 - -	638,369
Ditto - - - Ditto - - 1834 - -	521,214
Less by - - - -	117,155
Average of the last 19 years - - - -	404,417
Average of last six years - - - - -	450,425
Greater by - - -	46,008
Cassimeres exported in 1815 - - - -	92,691
Ditto - - 1834 - - - -	23,891
Deficiency - - -	68,800 or 60 per cent.
Average of the 19 years - - - - -	75,416
Average of the last six years - - - -	23,891
Decrease of the exports -	51,525

I have no documents which enable me to continue the comparison to 1837.

The following extracts are from a table which my friend Mr. Porter, of the Board of Trade, has recently drawn up, showing the proportion of finished manufactures or goods into the value of which much labour enters, and of goods into the value of which little labour enters, in the years 1827, 1830, 1834 and 1837.

	Centesimal Proportion, 1827.		Centesimal Proportion, 1830.		Centesimal Proportion, 1834.		Centesimal Proportion, 1837.	
	Much Labour.	Little Labour.	Much Labour.	Little Labour.	Much Labour.	Little Labour.	Much Labour.	Little Labour.
Russia, Sweden, Denmark.	31·17	68·83	27·16	72·84	21·31	75·69	18·53	81·47
Prussia, Germany, Holland and Belgium.	67·91	32·09	63·20	36·80	55·09	44·91	47·53	52·47
Southern Europe - -	83·88	16·12	84·18	15·82	81·81	18·19	76·41	23·59
United States of America	95·83	4·17	95·57	4·43	93·31	6·69	86·30	13·70

These extracts show that the proportion which the finished manufactured goods required of us bears to the articles which may be finished abroad, after being imported in a raw or half-finished state from here, such as *yarn*, raw or cast iron, in other words, machinery for manufacturing, has been constantly diminishing; and they corroborate the statement, that the foreigners are making great strides in the improvement of their manufactures, and prove that in the great and important markets of Europe we are being supplanted either by their own manufactures or by those of some other state.

Savings Banks.

The result of my inquiries concerning the deposits in these banks is, that very few weavers have placed money in them. I cannot however infer from this, alone, that they have not saved money, for reasons which will appear in the following quotation. "Work-people do not like putting money in the savings banks,

banks, because their masters and other persons can then know what they are possessed of. Converses a good deal with his work-people, and ascertains that this feeling exists among them." In another place I find, "The depositors are generally domestic servants or treasurers of benefit clubs. Labourers of any description are not numerous."

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There are a few weavers who have money in these banks to a small amount, but some of them are probably in the case of one alluded to in the following evidence: "There is one weaver who has money in the savings bank, but he had property left to him." We need not be surprised to find that domestic servants are depositors in these banks; they have always sufficient to satisfy the cravings of hunger; they live in comfortably warmed apartments, and have only the gratification of their vanity in dress, which many have no opportunity even of displaying, to contend with. Nor need we be much astonished at finding on the other hand, that the labourer whose wages are rarely more than sufficient to satisfy the cravings of hunger, even with the cheapest description of food, to find fuel to cook it, and garments however homely, or blankets to ward off the piercing winter cold, should fail in resolution to forego even one-half loaf a week, or one coarse blanket, in order to lay by a scanty provision for the future. Those few who from their situation as foremen or from other fortunate circumstances, or from possessing superior skill, talent or education, are above the general mass, and are enabled to put aside a portion of their earnings, generally prefer buying houses or gardens, or lending it at a greater interest than savings banks pay. The following extracts from the evidence will corroborate this view of the case:

"One man and his wife who earned last year 17*s.* 6*d.* per week between them, and had one child (a girl) also employed, have saved money enough to buy a house."

"Their son has also bought a house, with money saved in our employ as weaver and starcher."

At Chard, a manufacturer of broad cloth states that some of his weavers have been "able to save money and have houses of their own."

This desire of possessing a house extends so far as, in some instances where they have not saved sufficient for the purpose, to induce them to borrow money on mortgage of the property at 5 per cent. interest, which frequently makes their annual payment greater than the rent of a similar house would be.

The members of the benefit clubs whose money is deposited in these banks, are generally small shopkeepers or mechanics, such as carpenters, &c. The manufacturing labourers have their benefit clubs usually among themselves; the treasurer is frequently their employer, and the money is not placed in a savings bank.

Effect of occasional High Wages.

Whenever the monopoly of any new invention has enabled the proprietor to give high wages, or that he has been compelled so to do by the difficulty of procuring a sufficient number of workmen instructed in the new art, or by the effect of combinations among the operatives, the consequence is frequently drunkenness, neglect of their work and of their families.

I do not mean to say that this is universal, but it is of more frequent occurrence than where wages are at a medium rate. Those who have been in the best circumstances, as regards wages in the trades which have come under my observation, viz. the pinmakers at Rodborough,* the woolcombers in the serge trade, and the carpet-weavers at Wilton, have the worst reputation. Those who are generally the best characters for steadiness, are persons who, by giving their whole time to their employment, can earn from 12*s.* to 15*s.* per week.

The following extract from the evidence of one of the gentlemen managing a carpet factory, who is also a magistrate, will illustrate this: "One or two of the 19 employed by us are thorough drunkards. One man, who earned 95*l.* a year

* These are more especially in Mr. Miles's district, but I visited the factory with him, and therefore introduced it here.

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a year in one loom, which, after deducting all expenses, gave him 1*l.* 10*s.* 6½*d.* per week net (he is an extraordinary quick hand), spent a good deal of this at the public-house, and neglected his family, who look starved and miserable. Have endeavoured to prevent this, and hope soon to be able to remedy it."

In the serge trade, I have evidence as follows: "The combers earn 24*s.* a week, and they are sad drinking fellows. I put in a boy as an apprentice, and the men have just now threatened to strike, but I mean to persevere."

Again, in another district: "Out of the 30 combers they employ, half-a-dozen may be steady ones; they always work in a warm place, and this may be the cause of their drinking; they will work early and late when at work, but they are irregular. They are paid on Friday afternoon, but many do not work on Saturday and Monday. There is not one beer-shop in the town, but there are 10 public-houses; the men generally drink beer, not spirits."

I have not found that additional means have given them a desire for intellectual pursuits generally. In every generation we shall no doubt have one or more bright examples of frugality, industry, and love of knowledge, joined to perseverance and self-denial, which will render them effective, and Arkwright or Watt will still find a representative; but there are great difficulties in the way, great obstacles to be removed before the pursuit of knowledge will extensively supersede the gratification of mere physical enjoyments.

The best modes of obtaining this desideratum will be early education and a paternal superintendence of the labourers by their employer, under a well-regulated and strictly-enforced discipline. I am happy to say that all which I have seen and heard in my journey, leads me to expect that the day is not far distant when a very great advance will be made towards the attainment of this state of things. The attention of the richer classes is directed to the subject; it is taken up with energy and good will in some places; the advantage derived from it is evident, and will doubtless not escape the observation of those who are interested in the matter, who will "go and do likewise."

Let us hope, then, that we may soon see the time when our operatives are able to earn by their labour (I can venture to assert that among them there exists no disinclination for work, "it is not the Englishman's character") more than sufficient to maintain in decency and comfort themselves and their families, and that the surplus will be applied to cultivating and enlarging the powers of, that which peculiarly distinguishes man, and separates him from the rest of the animal creation, his reason, and towards directing his mental faculties to the attainment of all that is desirable for the performance of his duties, as one of a great and enlightened community.

In concluding this Report, I beg leave to solicit your indulgence for many defects of style or deficiency of information. For the first I have to plead the want of experience in committing to writing my observations and opinions; for the latter, the extent and variety of the topics embraced by this inquiry, the wide tract of country over which the objects of it are dispersed, and further, the limited time and means allowed me.

I have, &c.

51, Cambridge-street, Edgeware-road,
9 January 1839.

Anthony Austin.

West Riding of Yorkshire, Macclesfield, &c.

REPORT from Solomon Keyser, Esq., on the Linen Weavers of *Yorkshire*, and the Silk Weavers of *Macclesfield*.

To Nassau William Senior, Samuel Jones Loyd, W. E. Hickson, and John Leslie, Esquires, Her Majesty's Commissioners for inquiring into the Condition of the Hand-Loom Weavers in the United Kingdom.

Gentlemen,

Linen Weavers, Yorkshire.

Report of S. Keyser, Esq.

In obedience to your instructions, I left London on the 22d of July, and proceeded to Leeds, where I communicated with Mr. Chapman, and had only commenced the investigation by private visits and one day's public examination of witnesses, when I was urgently called to London by a domestic calamity, soliciting leave of absence for four days. On my return to Leeds I continued the examination of witnesses and private inquiry, but have only transcribed such part of the evidence as relates to linen weavers. All information on the subject of woollen manufacture, and the condition of the weavers employed in that trade, has been carefully obtained, and will be ably supplied by Mr. Chapman. From Leeds I proceeded to Barnsley, Northallerton, Darlington, Knaresborough, and to every village in the neighbourhood of those places where linen weaving is carried on to any extent. Delegates from some villages also attended, to give evidence in the nearest towns.

The various descriptions of linen weaving carried on in each place, and (wherever it could be collected or correctly ascertained) the number of families or looms employed on each sort of work, are stated in the documents referred to in the Appendix.

The number of linen weavers in and about Leeds fluctuates continually. At present they are supposed to be from 600 to 700 only, but not long ago were about 900. One-fourth only of this number are generally employed on the better sorts of weaving, such as drills, ducks, &c., and earn considerably more money than those employed on ticks of a low description, towelling, canvas, bagging, &c.

The average wages per week, by a calculation as accurate as the data afford, will be 8 *s.* 4 *d.* net, when in full work, which is very seldom the case. For many months the trade has not afforded labour for one half of the hand-loom linen weavers; and those who, from circumstances, are obliged to remain in Leeds, were reduced to great distress. Even at the present time, when their situation is much improved, and there are fewer unemployed, I can state from my own observation, as well as the result of evidence, that the condition of the hand-loom weavers of Leeds and the neighbourhood is deplorable, far worse than that of other labourers of any description. I visited many, who are described as industrious, sober, and skilful workmen. Their habitations, containing scarcely any furniture, or necessary culinary or other utensils; the very ragged state of their clothing, and particularly that of their children; their scanty supply of bedding, and general want of every comfort, afford abundant proof of their great distress, more particularly in families where there are many young children not yet able to assist in obtaining a wretched livelihood.

The weavers in general are intelligent, steady, and sober men. Their moral character equally as good, if not superior, to the generality of the labouring class. Such, at least, is their character in Leeds. Many of them attend the several places of worship, and send their children to the Sunday and free day-schools. There are, however, numerous instances in which they are precluded from these advantages by actual want of decent clothing in which to appear.

The falling off in wages at Leeds is attributed to the very low prices at which the Scotch manufacturer can afford to sell his linens; they may be purchased in Leeds cheaper than they could be manufactured there. There is also a constant influx of Irish weavers, who, though not equal to the English in weaving the better descriptions, can work at the inferior, and accept lower wages than other workmen.

"Mr. Hill attributes the falling off in weavers' wages, in a great measure, to the

Mr. Hill, Linen Manufacturer.

Linen Weavers, Yorkshire.

Report of S. Keyser, Esq.

the very cheap prices at which the Scotch manufacturer can afford to sell his linens; Mr. H. being able to purchase here in Leeds many articles of coarse linen, of Scotch manufacture, at a cheaper rate than he could make them.

"There are some Irish weavers in linen now in Leeds, but their number has lately diminished; they work mostly on inferior descriptions, but they generally work cheaper than the English weavers. Mr. H. does not employ any, as he considers them inferior as workmen to the English; they are in general bad characters, as to dissipation and intemperance; they manage to live upon less than the English, but live miserably."

Wages have been gradually falling at Leeds, but the principal and most sudden depreciation, amounting to about 20 or 25 per cent., took place 17 years ago, at the time of the Barnsley turn-out, the particulars of which are stated in evidence.

"The greatest and most sudden depreciation in wages took place about 17 years ago, when they suddenly were lowered 2*s.* 6*d.* to 5*s.* in the pound. There was then a turn-out at Barnsley, and, after resisting for some time, the men were compelled by necessity to return to work at the reduced rate of wages."

"There was at that time an understanding between the masters at Barnsley and in Leeds, and the prices of wages were thus lowered at both places."

"Before the first list of prices was made, there was a great variation in the wages. The weavers met, and agreed to take a list from the average of the three principal houses, Tee, Jackson, and Mason."

"As far as regards our men, the average list from the three was lower than the wages we paid before. Certain manufacturers who had signed the list by compulsion,—I mean by compulsion, the threatening of farther outrages, as some had already taken place, put out their work at lower prices, and then Mr. Tee said, unless you stick to the list I cannot stick to it. The first outrage was after the list was made and signed, a piece was going to Ardsley, and the windows were broken. This outrage is what I alluded to. The compulsion I mentioned was a mob assembling before Mr. Cooper's house, which mob went from thence to Mr. Mason's. Cooper, in consequence, promised he would agree to the list, and signed a paper to that effect, which paper I saw in possession of Thomas Smith, a man fixed upon to obtain that paper. This I saw myself.

"In June 1816 the weavers had been in the habit of receiving fent, one yard out of a half piece, an allowance generally given, and there was an attempt made to take away the fent; it caused an uneasy feeling among the workmen. It was taken off at that time; things remained as they were. In 1818 there was an application on the part of the workmen for an advance in wages, in consequence of the trade being brisk, and from having been reduced in 1814. Meetings were held amongst the weavers, and they solicited their employers for an advance. Deputations were sent to each of the manufacturers. The manufacturers refused to comply. This caused a turn-out, and they were out of work from September till October; from 8th September till 28th October; six weeks. After that length of time they returned to their work at the old wages.

"In 1823 notice was given by the manufacturers, that on the 1st of May they should not deliver out any more pieces with the fents, and on the 1st May they struck work. The weavers would not take the work in that way. This caused a turn-out from that date, 1st May till July (some date in July), and the men then went to work again without the allowance of fents. From 1823 there were many reductions till 1829. A circumstance occurred in 1829 which brought out, that one of the manufacturers had made an assertion that he would reduce the ducks to 3*s.* 6*d.*, which had before been 5*s.* In consequence of that assertion the weavers held a meeting, and went to the same master to ascertain from him whether that was correct. He said he would agree to pay the same wages as Messrs. Tee, Jackson, and Mason, upon which a committee of weavers was appointed, and a list prepared by them and the said three masters, and a list was brought out, and that is the printed statement alluded to. After the weavers agreed to work for these wages the masters broke the agreement. In consequence of this refusal of what was agreed to in presence of the magistrates, the men refused to take the work in any other form, or at any other wages. There was another turn-out from June till October. Some were employed according to the printed list, but many were out of work in consequence of the masters not complying with that list.

"Some

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"Some men only continued to work, but the turn-out was pretty general. It was partial till the 8th October, and then general till the 31st October. The result of the turn-out was, that on the 31st of October they took work at the list that had been prepared by the manufacturers, which was a reduction upon the list of 2d June of 10 per cent.

"After 1829, when this list was not acted upon, the town of Barnsley remained without any regulation for weavers' wages, till 2d January 1836, and then a new list was made, which was produced by the weavers and agreed to by the masters. The weavers sent a petition to solicit the masters to pay according to this new agreement; many of them agreed to it the first time, and some of them were waited on twice in a friendly way, for it went on from the month of January 1836 till August 1837. The weavers had previously made application to the manufacturers to join them in forming a list. The manufacturers never attended to this, therefore the arrangement was made by the weavers, but the manufacturers agreed to it. The manufacturers were favourable to having a list to govern prices. In August 1837 the manufacturers produced a list of their own making, but did not call in the weavers to join them in making out this list. Whilst this list was in progress the weavers held two or three meetings, and deputations were appointed to wait on the manufacturers to solicit them to abide by the January list. At the first visitation made several manufacturers gave answer, that they had no desire to reduce, and some manufacturers stated, that they must make a reduction, and then one of the manufacturers (Wilson) stated to me, that the reduction would not amount to more than 5 per cent. There was a meeting of the weavers held on the 22d August, and it was agreed that they had no chance of contending against the masters; the principal desire was, that a list of prices should be maintained. When the printed list came out, it was a reduction of 7½ to 15 per cent. When it was found to be so great I waited again on Mr. Wilson, and observed, that the reduction was greater than he had mentioned; he felt disappointed, and expressed himself so, at the reduction being so great. That list, 7½ to 15 per cent. under the former prices, is the list now in operation. Some masters were all along averse to a list of prices.

"There is a union among the workmen here, and that union goes to prevent any man working for prices under the prices in the printed list, and that is the manufacturers' own list."

The weavers complain, amongst other hardships to which they are subjected, of the want of consideration on the part of the manufacturers, who, when requiring extra labour in the completion of work, or when from the inferior quality of yarn, the work of weaving is rendered more difficult and occupies more time, make no allowance to the weaver, whose wages by these means undergo a further reduction, although not actually in money.

"*Mathew Garbut*, a linen weaver, employed at his own house, working for W. Hill:—A married man, four children, principally employed on sheeting from 6-4ths to 12-4ths; 110 yards of yarn will make two pieces of about 48 yards each, the wages for which is at present 30 *s.*, from this 30 *s.* we must deduct at least 9 *d.* to 1 *s.* If the yarn be tolerably fair, it will take three weeks to make two pieces, working 12 or 14 hours a day; but with such yarn as I am now working it will, perhaps, take six weeks. The master makes no allowance for this difference in labour or time, in consequence of the inferior quality of the yarn; seldom gives any remuneration in such cases; he obliges us to take it, and if once put into the loom, the weaver must go on with it, or may be punished for leaving his work; and although he may, when the yarn is delivered to him, see that it is not good yarn, he cannot guess how long it will occupy him, as on putting it into the loom it may turn out much worse than it appeared, by which he is a sufferer without receiving any remuneration. Some of his family assist by winding, and some also assist in weaving. One, a boy 14 years of age, can earn in a week about 4 *s.* 6 *d.* net.

"One 13, weaving a mixed cloth of cotton and linen called union, 2 *s.* 6 *d.* net, the latter being much more easy work than the former. Has not had an opportunity of sending his children to a Sunday school; had not yet inquired about it; has himself taught the two eldest to read, write, and cast accounts.

"Business is at present rather slack; the master has not sufficient employment for all the hands, as the masters always have a number of hands waiting

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for work. I have no means of getting my children to any other trade, because I cannot pay a premium; my children are occupied on Sundays in being instructed by myself, they are very attentive; they go occasionally to a place of worship, but not regularly every Sunday.

"We have suffered more by alterations in the yarn, by putting different sizes through the same reed, than by a reduction of wages in money.

"Fourteen years ago I worked at Darlington; 42 beers, in 27 inches, took from 20 to 22 hanks. At present the same master is making them through the same reed, putting in 50 hanks, because the yarn is much finer, and this is done for even less wages, being now 11*s.* for what was then 18*s.* This different mode of working requires more time and labour.

"The yarn when first spun by machinery was not so fine as at present, and much better in quality, which rendered the work easier; now it is spun out to a very fine yarn, and this is more likely to cause trouble to the weaver. There is no yarn used now that is spun by hand.

"The power-looms throw many men out of employ in the cotton trade, and bring them to the linen; these cotton weavers can easily be taught the art of weaving linen, and they have done the linen weavers much injury. The power-looms have also brought cotton into such general wear by the cheapness of price, that there is less demand for linen for general purposes.

"As yet there is not much linen woven in Leeds by power-looms, but it will no doubt be much increased.

"The corn laws are a great injury, as they raise the price of provisions, and, make foreign nations manufacture for themselves."

Much of the weaver's time is lost in waiting for work, and having to apply for it to manufacturers residing at a distance; it is stated by Robert Nelson,—

"Some of the men have at least to go two miles to the warehouse, and if we take a bagging as a sample (an instance), the warp and weft will weigh above 80lbs. which he has to carry home and weave, the warp being 100 yards long, and then to take back, for which he will only get net 4*s.* 6*d.*, after paying winding, &c., but it often happens at some of the warehouses that he has to go many times before he gets the whole."*

The wages of all other labourers at Leeds are considerably higher than those of the hand-loom weavers.

The weavers of Leeds attribute much of their distress to the existing corn laws, as not only raising the price of bread, but also inducing foreigners to manufacture goods, which, under other circumstances, they would import from this country in exchange for grain. They consider a repeal of the corn laws would afford them great relief. They are also violently opposed to the introduction of power-looms, which, although hitherto not carried to a sufficient extent in the linen trade directly to injure the hand-loom weavers, still, by throwing many cotton weavers out of employ, these are induced to take up the trade of linen weavers, and thus by increasing their numbers lessen the demand for labour and bring wages down, besides which, owing to the much cheaper price at which cotton goods can be purchased since the introduction of machinery, cotton has been substituted for linen in many articles of clothing.

There is no doubt that many power-looms for weaving linens will, in a very short time, be brought into active operation in Leeds.

After some preliminary visits and private inquiry, I commenced the public examination of witnesses at Barnsley on the 17th August.

Barnsley.

Barnsley may be considered the most important town in Yorkshire in which linen weaving is carried on, not only as regards the number of persons engaged in hand-loom weaving, but also by their influence in regulating the rates of wages, in many other places where the Barnsley printed lists† have for the most part been adopted to regulate prices between masters and men.

At the time of my inquiry at Barnsley, the trade was considered good, and up to the present date (September 1838), I am informed it continues so, and that there is no scarcity of work.

In order to obtain as correct an average of wages as could be ascertained, I induced a principal manufacturer to favour me with an extract from his books, showing the earnings of a considerable number of weavers in his employ for various

* Appendix (A.). † Appendix.

various periods at different seasons of the year, stating the days on which work was taken out, and returned to the warehouse, and the amount of wages paid. *

After considerable discussion and objections on the part of the weavers to the mode in which this document was made up, it was referred to a committee of the weavers, who, after a long conference with the manufacturer, returned the statement with trifling alterations, and pronounced it a fair average statement of the weavers' earnings when fully employed. The result being gross wages, average per piece 12 *s.* 8 *d.* The labour calculated on an average seven days and seven hours per piece, making per week of six days

	s.	*d.*	
	10	–	
	2	1	deductions for winding, &c.
Net - -	7	11	

The weavers also furnished me with an average statement of wages, † the result of which gives a net weekly earning of 7 *s.* 8 ½ *d.* The trifling difference in these two statements may be easily accounted for, the weavers in their statement deducting from the gross wages per week,

	s.	*d.*
Winding, dressing and brushes - - - -	1	8 ½
Loom rent - - - - - - - -	–	6
Candles - - - - - - - -	–	3
Wear and tear of implements - - - -	–	1
	2	6 ½

being rather more than stated in evidence, and taken in the foregoing calculation, where only 2 *s.* 1 *d.* is deducted from the gross weekly wages.

To the weavers' statement of earnings, they have annexed several observations on their general condition, and pointing out other items not taken into the above calculation, but which may also be considered deductions from wages. This statement bears the signatures of three persons deputed to present it by the general body of weavers, and is in the following words:

"The weavers are at the very lowest average, one week out of eight, fully employed in changing from one sort of work to another, and going to and from the warehouses concerning their work, for which they do not get a single farthing remuneration; and very often these changes are attended with considerable expense over and above what they ever stipulate as deductions from their wages, such as winding, loom-rent, dressing, &c., and for which they cannot make any accurate calculation. These changes are very laborious, and very frequently can only be managed by the studious artizan. In many other trades the same amount of labour and skill would secure to the workman a very high amount of wages. The time and expense thus incurred are not deducted from the statement of the average earnings of the weavers of Barnsley, for which in general they do bitterly complain, being, in their opinion, unexampled in any other trade.

"There is also at the very lowest calculation among the weavers, one week out of every eight that they will be entirely without employment, and being so very numerous, not a tithe of them can get any other kind of employment in the neighbourhood where they reside. When these two great deductions are made from the earnings of the weavers when fully employed, there would only remain about 5 *s.* 6 *d.* a week for a man's earnings, for be it understood, this statement applies exclusively to the men. Boys and girls do not average above half that amount.

"Thus then the 5 *s.* 6 *d.* a week is to provide the weaver with food, raiment, house-rent, fire, education, books, medical attendance, and every other necessary of life. For this pittance of 5 *s.* 6 *d.* a week, they produce shirting cloths, sheeting, bed-ticks, checks, ducks, table linen, furniture covers, fine drills, and many other articles of intrinsic value and great worth, administering comfort to the

* Appendix (B.) † Appendix (C.)

Linen Weavers, Yorkshire.

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the people of this and distant lands; and it is a lamentable fact that their own countrymen can, and do, take these valuable productions of their labour, without any apparent compunction of mind for the inadequate emolument of 5*s.* 6*d.* a week. This has created an impression on their minds, which is taking deep root, that people are doing unto them as they would not wish to be done unto.

"The committee of weavers appointed to conduct this inquiry have been connected with the linen trade upwards of 20 years, and have a knowledge of it in every department. Therefore they pledge themselves that the foregoing statement is the highest average."

(signed) *Richard Taylor.*
William Thackeray.
John Vallance.

John Vallance.

"I am a linen weaver, and work at present for Mr. Harvey at drill weaving. I have a house, a four-loom shop. I have seven children, six on our own hands; they consist of a girl aged 18, a boy 14, a girl 9, a boy 16, a girl 11, and a girl 4 years of age. Only myself employed on drill weaving, some of the family on other work; they are all included in this statement.

"At present my earnings are on an average of three months, per week,

	s.	d.
Self	11	3
Girl, 18	9	6
Ditto, 16	6	4
Boy, 14	6	6
£.	1 13	7
Deduct for winding	– 5	7
£.	1 8	– for the family.

(The girl of 11 assists in winding.)

This is when they are fully employed. I consider it will take me an hour a day to look after my family, and that hour a day I consider 1*s.* a week.

"Weavers are under great rent in consequence of their looms; the loom makes 4½*d.* each additional. This brings our wages down to 6*s.* 7½*d.* each per week.

"From 1 May till 31 October 1837, the earnings of myself and same family were

	£.	s.	d.
	25	6	2
Less 3*s.* 4*d.* in the pound winding, &c.	4	4	4
£.	21	1	10

(Wife and child, aged 11, employed in winding.)

Which, divided into 26 weeks, will leave the average of each per week, 4*s.* 1*d.*

"I came to Barnsley in 1813; in 1814 wages were at the highest. A material reduction took place in 1814, in the month of August. A sudden reduction; it may have been caused by an alteration in the circumstances of the time, but the impression on my mind is, that it was caused by the masters: it has been operated on in both ways, caused in a great measure by the alteration in the times. I cannot say positively, but I think it must have been caused by the manufacturers; it was immediately after the rejoicings of the peace. I believe it was in consequence of a general understanding amongst the manufacturers; the men went on quietly working for the reduced wages. Some manufacturers would be at a lower rate of wages than others, and in consequence of that some others were obliged to do the same, and it generally happened that they regulated the wages downwards.

"In June 1816, the weavers had been in the habit of receiving fent one yard out of half a piece, an allowance generally given, and there was an attempt made to take away the fent; it caused an uneasy feeling among the workmen; it was taken off at that time: things remained as they were. In 1818, there was an application on the part of the workmen for an advance in wages in consequence of the trade being brisk, and from having been reduced in 1814. Meetings were held amongst the weavers, and they solicited their employers for an advance. Deputations were sent to each of the manufacturers; the manufacturers

facturers refused to comply. This caused a turn-out, and they were out of work from September till October, from 8th September till 28th October, six weeks. After that length of time, they returned to their work at the old wages.

"There were gradual reductions after 1818, by some manufacturers taking care to be at the lowest, even after the others had come down; they went still lower, keeping the trade at a perpetual reduction.

"In 1823, notice was given by the manufacturers that, on the 1st of May, they should not deliver out any more pieces with the fents, and on the 1st May they struck work. The weavers would not take the work in that way; this caused a turn-out from that date, 1st May, till July (some date in July), and the men then went to work again without the allowance of fents. From 1823, there were many reductions till 1829.

"A circumstance occurred in 1829, which brought out that one of the manufacturers had made an assertion that he would reduce the ducks to 3*s.* 6*d.*, which had before been 5*s.* In consequence of that assertion, the weavers held a meeting, and went to the same master to ascertain from him whether that was correct; he said he would agree to pay the same wages as Messrs. Tee, Jackson and Mason, upon which a committee of weavers was appointed, and a list prepared by them and the said three masters, and a list was brought out, and that is the printed statement alluded to. After the weavers agreed to work for these wages, the masters* broke the agreement. In consequence of this refusal of what was agreed to in the presence of the magistrates, the men refused to take the work in any other form or at any other wages. There was another turn-out from June till October; some were employed according to the printed list, but many were out of work in consequence of the masters not complying with that list.

"Some men only continued to work, but the turn-out was pretty general. It was partial till the 8th October, and then general till the 31st October. The result of the turn-out was, that, on the 31st October, they took work at the list that had been prepared by the manufacturers, which was a reduction upon the list of 2d June of 10 per cent.

"The first disturbance was on the 27th August, when windows were broken; before that time the masters all dissented from the agreement.

"After 1829, when this list was not acted upon, the town of Barnsley remained without any regulation for weavers' wages till 2d January 1836, and then a new list was made, which was produced by the weavers, and agreed to by the masters. The weavers sent a petition to solicit the masters to pay according to this new agreement; many of them agreed to it the first time, and some of them were waited on twice in a friendly way, for it went on from the month of January 1836 till August 1837. The weavers had previously made application to the manufacturers to join them in forming a list; the manufacturers never attended to this, therefore the arrangement was made by the weavers, but the manufacturers agreed to it. The manufacturers were favourable to having a list to govern prices.

"In August 1837, the manufacturers produced a list of their own making, but did not call in the weavers to join them in making out this list. Whilst this list was in progress, the weavers held two or three meetings, and deputations were appointed to wait on the manufacturers to solicit them to abide by the January list. At the first visitation made, several manufacturers gave answer that they had no desire to reduce, and some manufacturers stated that they must make a reduction; and then one of the manufacturers (Wilson) stated to me, that the reduction would not amount to more than 5 per cent. There was a meeting of the weavers held on the 22d August, and it was agreed that they had no chance of contending against the masters; the principal desire was, that a list of prices should be maintained. When the printed list came out, it was a reduction of 7½ to 15 per cent. When it was found to be so great, I waited again on Mr. Wilson, and observed that the reduction was greater than he had mentioned; he felt disappointed, and expressed himself so, at the reduction being so great. That list, 7½ to 15 per cent. under the former prices, is the list now in operation. Some masters were all along averse to a list of prices."

In

* Norris says in evidence, "In the first instance, the list was not broken by all until certain outrages had been committed, in consequence of which the manufacturers made common cause."

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In explanation, it may be necessary to observe that the allowance of "fents," alluded to in the evidence of Vallance, as well as in the table of reductions of wages, was discontinued in 1823. This allowance consisted in one yard of cloth in every piece, which was the perquisite of the weaver.

Beers.	DESCRIPTION OF WORK.	Price paid from 1811 to 1814.	1818.	1825.	1829.	1838.
		with fent.	with fent.			
		£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.
34	7/8 linen	1 2 –	– 17 7	– 18 2	– 14 3	– 13 –
36	4/4 ditto	1 5 4	– 18 8	– 18 8	– 15 6	– 14 6
56	5/4 ditto	2 2 11	1 14 8	1 12 –	1 6 –	1 4 –
66	8/4 ditto	– –	2 13 4	2 – –	1 7 –	1 5 6
102	10/4 ditto	– –	4 7 6	2 18 –	2 8 –	2 – –
27	Duck	– 16 6	– 13 –	– 13 –	– 10 –	– 10 –
37	4/4 ditto	– –	1 2 –	1 2 –	– 17 7	– 16 –
37	4/4 check	– –	1 8 –	1 4 2	1 1 5	– 19 –
41	4/4 drabbet	– –	– –	– –	1 8 –	1 5 –
40	6/4 mock tick	– –	– –	– –	– –	– 18 –
42	6/4 tick	– –	2 4 –	1 15 2	1 8 –	1 4 –
36	4/4 huckabacks and diapers.	2 14 10	1 8 7	1 5 4	– 18 –	– 16 –
54	6/4 ditto	3 12 10	2 11 –	1 13 9	1 5 10	1 3 –
72	8/4 3 division common twill	5 10 –	3 17 –	2 14 –	1 17 5	1 15 –
66	Plain drill	2 10 –	2 6 –	2 1 –	1 11 8	1 4 –
14	Towelling	– –	– 11 –	– 9 4	– –	– 6 –
27&28	7/8 towelling	– –	– 11 –	– 9 4	– –	– 6 –
24	Duck	– –	– 12 –	– 11 6	– 8 6	– 8 6
24	Plain glass cloth	– –	– –	– –	– 9 4	– 9 –
28	3/4 huckabacks and diapers.	1 10 9	1 3 1	1 – 2	– 15 6	– 12 –
28	3/4 union, ditto	– –	– –	– –	– 14 6	– 10 –
30	7/8 plain union	– –	– 16 6	– 16 6	– 11 –	– 9 –
62	3/4 plain ditto	– –	2 12 –	1 18 –	1 2 6	– 91 –

The following statement is also given in evidence to show the falling off in wages at various periods down to the present time, which, as it differs from the foregoing in some descriptions and dates, I have also inserted it at length :—

In low work, about 25 years ago; say 1812–1813:
$\frac{7}{8}$ union, 100 yards, 33 beers.
Fent allowed, 16 *s.* per piece.

The same article at present, 110 yards, only 10 *s.* a piece; consequently a falling off of 6 *s.* in 16 *s.* in price of wages; 6 *d.* the present value of the fent *not* allowed, and 10 per cent. additional labour by increase of length.

In 1815, a $\frac{7}{8}$ linen, 100 yards, 27 beers.
Fent allowed, 17 *s.* 6 *d.*

Present price, 110 yards, no fent allowed, 10 *s.* 6 *d.*

In 1815, ducks, 27 beers; no alteration in length; about 12 or 12 $\frac{1}{2}$ hanks.
Fent allowed, 16 *s.* 6 *d.*

At present 14 hanks, which additional quantity requires more labour, amounting to half a day in a week.
No fent, 9 *s.* 6 *d.*

Twenty-five years ago diaper yard wide, 100 yards in yarn.
Fent allowed, then worth 1 *s.* 9 *d.*, 50 *s.* for 100 yards.
Twenty-five shillings per bunt *.

At present 110 yards.
No fent allowed, which may be valued at present about 1 *s.*; 17 *s.* 6 *d.*

* $\frac{1}{2}$ a piece.

Twenty-five years ago, $\frac{6}{4}$ satin diaper, two divisions, twill, 60 beers.
Fent allowed, 5 *l.*
Value of fent, 3 *s.* 6 *d.*

At present no fent allowed.
Wages only 1 *l.* 14 *s.* 6 *d.*
Value of fent, 2 *s.* 3 *d.*

In 1818, drill, five leaf plain, 100 yards, 50 beers.
Fent allowed, 42 *s.*

Present wages for 100 yards
No fent allowed, 19 *s.*
Value of fent, 1 *s.*

Provisions are at a moderate price in Barnsley. Fuel from the collieries in the immediate neighbourhood may be obtained at a very cheap rate.

The

The following is given in evidence as the expenses of a family, consisting of eight persons; a man, his wife, and six children, per week:— Linen Weavers, Yorkshire.

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	£.	s.	d.
Three stone of flour	–	6	6
Oatmeal	–	–	6
Meat	–	3	–
Potatoes	–	–	9
Butter	–	–	7½
Sugar	–	1	–
Tea, &c.	–	–	6
Candles	–	–	9
Soap, 7½*d.*; Milk, 1*s.* 2*d.*	–	1	9½
Lard	–	–	4
Sundries	–	1	–
House-rent	–	3	–
Taxes	–	–	3
	£. 1	1	–

besides clothing, bedding, &c. The witness, in this case, having a loom, his own property, considers the value of advantage gained by that sufficient to clothe himself.

There is a great disposition amongst the weavers to bring up their children well and respectably.

"I have seen a great disposition among the weavers to bring up their children well and respectably." Mr. Wm. Fletcher, a Manufacturer.

They are sent to the Sunday schools. The reason for the parents not attending places of worship is frequently want of decent clothing. This also operates in preventing many children from attending the schools.

"The reason for parents not attending places of worship is frequently want of decent clothing. This also operates in preventing the children from attending schools."

The very oppressive as well as (I believe) illegal practice of paying weavers wages otherwise than in money is stated to exist in some instances, by no means frequent, nor resorted to by the principal manufacturers.

"I can name an instance where a manufacturer named Tyne refused to pay the weaver for the first piece before he brought home the second, as he found fault with four yards of the first piece, and when the man brought home the second he would not pay him otherwise than in cloth, and gave him 13 yards of 4-4 duck at 1 *s.* 2½ *d.* per yard; he took the cloth and tried to sell it at different shops in the town, but found he could have bought it at 1 *s.* a yard." William Ashton, a Weaver.

The mention of this practice called forth a denial on the part of some, and was partially admitted, at least not completely negatived, by one or two manufacturers.

Other instances, in which the weavers are liable to ill treatment by their employers, are detailed in the evidence of Thackery.

There are Sunday and other free schools at Barnsley, also various charitable institutions, particulars of which will be furnished in the documents annexed.

There is a union at Barnsley to prevent weavers from working under the prices in the printed lists.

Very few weavers can afford to subscribe to the benefit societies or sick clubs at Barnsley.

The moral condition of the Barnsley weavers is highly spoken of by their employers and others with whom I conversed on the subject, and I have found them, for the most part, sober, steady, and intelligent to a degree far above what might be expected in their humble situation. Their dwellings present an appearance of comfort much superior to that of weavers in other places. Their cottages are built of stone for the most part, in the airy and dry situations for which the town and neighbourhood afford abundant space, the situation being remarkably healthy. The cellars in which they work are not more damp than is desirable for carrying on their trade. Well ventilated, and even where the inhabitants are suffering from extreme poverty, their houses have a look of cleanliness and good order. There are of course exceptions to this rule, but they are not very numerous. In their persons, clothing, and the appearance of

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their children, the Barnsley weavers contrast favourably with the same class of persons at Leeds and elsewhere.

It must, however, be kept in view that the time of my investigation at Barnsley was a period of comparative prosperity, the sufferings and privations of the weavers some months ago having been very great, but even when fully employed on the best work the weavers' wages are below those of any other journeymen, some persons employed in the collieries only excepted.

For some cases of individual distress, amounting almost to actual starvation, I refer to the evidence of Thackery. Few power-looms are as yet employed in linen weaving at Barnsley, but their number is likely to increase considerably. Although at present, and for some time to come evidently tending to throw many hand-loom weavers out of employ, their ultimate advantage to the trade is ably described in the evidence of a manufacturer. He gives it as his opinion, that "before power-looms are even generally brought into operation, they will occupy all the hand-loom weavers who can be found to work at them."

Mr. Cocker.

At Knaresborough the linen trade has greatly fallen off, and has been very bad for the last 12 months. The situation of the place is by no means so favourable as that of Barnsley. Coals are brought 18 miles by land carriage. There are no canals in the immediate neighbourhood.

The population is evidently decreasing, as the following statement will show:

In 1801	- - -	4,202.	
1811	- - -	5,067,	865 increase in 10 years.
1821	- - -	6,656,	1,589 — —
1831	- - -	6,894,	238 only in the latter 10 years.

This falling off is attributed to the weavers leaving Knaresborough, and going to Barnsley and other places. There are at present about 130 cottages empty.

Mr. Richard Dewes, formerly a manufacturer, now overseer of the poor, says in his evidence, "The situation of the weavers here is most deplorable; they are suffering much. As assistant overseer, I have the opportunity of seeing it. There are many able-bodied men, who, by working day and night, are not able to get a living, owing to the low rate of wages. We have a dispensary, a lying-in charity, some free Sunday and day schools. Much good is done here by private charity, but there is much demand for it.

"I consider the weavers much worse paid than any other workmen. I have had many men in my employ who would formerly have scorned to ask charity, and are now obliged to do so. We have 68 poor persons on our pension list, not one of whom is an agricultural labourer, they are all weavers or flax dressers; also about 30 having casual relief, all weavers."

Mr. Thorpe, a considerable manufacturer, says in evidence, "The weavers are very badly off; from my own knowledge of weaving, I know they are so. They are certainly the worst paid of any description of workmen. They could not, with the greatest industry and exertion, do as well as other workmen."

Other manufacturers confirm this statement.

The general average of wages will be, according to various data from which I have endeavoured to calculate accurately on 404 looms, the number at present employed in various descriptions of linen (mostly, however, of the lower sorts), about 7 *s.* 4 *d.* net per week.

It is necessary here to observe, that I have in all cases found great difficulty in reconciling the average weekly wages, as stated by the weavers, with the account of weekly earnings taken from the manufacturers' books, because of the difference in estimating the time required to work a certain quantity. The weavers assert that wherever the books show the work to have been done in a shorter time than their own statements, it is when from necessity they have worked over hours, often 14, 16, and even 18 hours a day: labour, which it would be impossible to continue for any length of time. This is not confirmed by the opinion of the masters; and, from my own observation, I should say such extraordinary forced labour is resorted to in very few instances.

The Barnsley list is not generally held as regulating wages at Knaresborough, and there is a considerable difference in the rates paid by the different masters. This, as well as the various hardships and inconveniences to which the

the weavers are subjected, will be found fully described in the evidence of Brown, Marshall, Dooker and others *.

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Richard Dewes, formerly a Weaver, now Overseer.

"The general state of the trade is very bad, and has been so for 12 months. I attribute the last 12 months' slack in the town to the influx of Scotch goods, the manufacturers have been cramped in their exportation to America, and now send them to different parts of this country. The articles mostly made here are low ginghams, low bedding ticks, sheetings. We feel the want of canals. Our coals are brought 18 miles by land carriage, and all other goods a considerable distance. The yarn manufactured here goes to Barnsley to be woven.

"There has been a general falling off in the trade for 15 or 20 years.

"In 1823 there was a turn-out which lasted 28 weeks, from July till January. The men after suffering great distress returned to their labour, and we consider the trade of the place has been declining ever since.

"The weavers show a great inclination to educate their children. There are about 1,700 to 2,000 children at the different schools.

Vide List of Schools, &c., Appendix (G.)

"A man having many children is likely to put them to the loom as soon as he can get anything by their labour. Marrying very young is not so prevalent here as at other places. I think the times have rather had an effect to lessen the number of marriages. Most of the dwellings are comfortable; rents about 1 *s.* per week. The looms generally belong to the manufacturers, but there are some free looms.

"All the workmen remaining at Knaresborough are such as are kept there by ties of family or connexion, or they would certainly leave. There are many cottages empty, and many cannot pay their rent nor rates. The population of Knaresborough and Scriven, in

1801	4,202		Increase in 10 years.
1811	5,067		865
1821	6,656		1,589
1831	6,894		238

"This falling off is to be attributed to the weavers leaving Knaresborough, and going principally to Barnsley and other places. There are present at least 130 cottages empty.

"Other workmen's wages here: Carpenters, 4 *s.* a day; masons, about 3 *s.* 6 *d.* a day; bleachers, when employed, 24 *s.* a week. Tailors, shoemakers, &c. have little to do on account of the poverty of the place, and they form a very small proportion of the inhabitants. All the weavers' children, with very few exceptions, attend the Sunday schools. We have a savings' bank, but no weavers make deposits."

John Harper, a Weaver.

"I am a single man. I work for Messrs. Walton, Oates & Co. I am now working on blue linen. My wages are 7 *s.* 8 *d.* per piece, 51 yards in cloth. I can work a piece in a week. I pay no loom standing. Deduct for winding 1 *s.* 8 *d.*, net earnings 6 *s.* per week.

"When a country is generally depressed, there must be some deficiency. The state of the country is depressed. The deficiency must be in the legislative enactments. Hand-loom weaving is the most depressed of all trades; there must be some causes for this depression.

"The two special evils are, 1. The facility with which a man can become a weaver. I was working at Barnsley 2 years ago, when the trade was brisk. One morning 30 Irishmen came into the town, each proposed to become a weaver. They got friends and got work. They had never worked as weavers before. One took an 80 drill, he carried it home; he saved 20 hanks. The piece was spoilt; they did their work badly.

"2. Competition among the masters. They embark in business, and those who wish to get customers undersell others. Bad masters make the good ones reduce their wages. There is also competition among the workmen. They get work; wish to please the master, they work certain things better than usual, and put in 5, 6, or 10 hanks more.

"The

* No. 2.

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"The general evils are the confiscation of waste lands. Many acres of waste lands, which were the property of the poor; those lands not having the rents divided amongst them.

"I consider the new poor-law affects the interest of the weavers very considerably. Sooner than go to the workhouse, they will work for anything; also the national debt, with the great amount of taxes, pensions and sinecures; also the corn laws and machinery. I would have corn free, and machinery liable to a high duty. As free-born Englishmen, we all pay taxes to defend our country. Our remedy would be universal suffrage.

"The-poor-law commissioners have done plenty in establishing their plans, but we do not expect these commissioners to do much for us. The weavers are too poor to get anything to drink."

William Harper, a Weaver.

"I work for Mr. Thorpe. I am a married man and have a family, two are working with me. I work a 40 or 44 inch sheeting, 42 hanks; wages 11 *s.* 7 *d.*, deduction 2 *s.* 3 *d.*, net earning 9 *s.* 4 *d.*

"My wife winds for me. I have two sons who can weave; they each earn about 6 *s.* a week. We sometimes are a long while waiting for work.

"Machinery has very much injured the linen trade, because cotton is now bought instead of linen.

"The corn laws are a great injury, making the price of provisions so high.

"Until the working classes have an interest in Parliament, all the investigations will be of no use. There is no economy in the country whilst thousands are starving. The poor laws are a great evil. I am a great advocate for teetotalism, as it is called. I recommend and practise abstinence from strong liquors."

Mathew Wiseman, in the house of Walton, Oates & Co.

"The trade of Knaresborough has fallen off; it has certainly not increased. The population has remained stationary. The greatest injury to this part of the country is the introduction of low goods from Scotland, where from the low rate of wages they can undersell us in low goods, and the consumption of low goods is much greater than that of fine. The trade in Scotland fell off very much in consequence of the American panic, and a great quantity of goods were sent here, and to all parts of the country. I do not think the effects of that panic are as yet worn off. Its effect was just on those articles on which the weavers of this place are mostly employed.

"If the wages in Scotland were kept equal to ours, we could afford to pay 15 per cent. more in wages, and occupy a much greater number of hands."

Thorpe, a Manufacturer.

"I consider the weavers very badly off. From my own knowledge of weaving I know they are so. The weavers are certainly the worst paid of any description of workmen.

"They could not, with the greatest industry and exertion, do as well as other workmen.

"There is a greater variety of linen manufactured here now than years ago. The proportion is much greater of low articles, paying the low wages. The opportunities for education, either very cheap or gratis, exist here perhaps more than at any town in England.

"At the very time when the Barnsley list was forced upon the manufacturers here, and when of course there must have been a demand for labour, corn was very cheap, and we find therefore that wages do not always rise or fall in proportion to the price of corn. There are no apprentices. It is very easy to become a weaver. They are very soon in a situation to earn money for their employers.

"A piece of linen, formerly sold for 33 *s.* 9 *d.* (21 years ago), now sells for 16 *s.* or 17 *s.*

"Wages were at that time the highest price, 5 *s.* 6 *d.*; at present, wages 3 *s.*

"White yarn was then 23 *s.* 9 *d.* per bundle; present price, 11 *s.* 9 *d.* (both engine spun)."

James Brown. Linen Weaver.

"I work for Mr. Thorpe. I have five children and wife, seven in all. I work at ticks; it is heavy work, and a bunt a week is as much as I can do. I can work it in a week when I can get it.

"A

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	s.	d.		s.	d.
"A 28 tick, 54 or 55 yards in the cloth, wages	12	7	net, self	10	4
"Deductions	2	3			
"One girl earns	4	10	one girl	3	1
"Deductions	1	9			
"The youngest child earns about				1	6
"Rent 1 *s.* per week.					
Total per week				14	11

"All the children of sufficient age go to the Sunday school. The boy goes to the National school, and learns to read and write. The Sunday schools do not all teach writing. There are evening schools, where writing is taught gratis. We have very often to wait for work, and at other times we work very hard.

"I consider that workmen in other trades are much better off by 8 *s.* a week. A weaver is a degraded being. There was a turn-out in 1823. Fents were never allowed here. Some masters have paid the men by giving goods instead of money, and charging them at their usual price. It has been done, but I do not know that it exists at present. We have sick societies, but they are not generally subscribed to. We used to work by the Barnsley list, but for the last 12 months the masters thought it would be best to discontinue regulating by that list, and from that time the whole of them have adopted a different course, and have returned to the old scale of wages. About three or four years ago we applied for an advance, and got an advance of 1 *s.* in the pound, which remains so at present.

See printed list, Knaresborough, 1836.

"The corn bill is one of the greatest injuries we can have. In 1815 our wages were high, but ever since that period, whether the corn bill has had the effect or not, our wages have been gradually declining. I consider the corn bill a great evil; it prevents foreigners taking our manufactured goods as we will not take their produce. The repeal would of course do us good. Before we had the Barnsley statement, some paid the same wages for greater lengths.

"We have no additional wages when work is required to be particularly well done.

"Our general inclination is to send the children to school, to Sunday schools, but in the week they must be employed at work. My daughter to weave a piece per week must work 10 hours, she could not do it in working eight hours a day. Supposing a law were made that children should not work more than eight hours a day; I should not like that; I do not like liberty to be encroached upon. When there is other work, there are some men as well as women employed in harvest work, &c.

"The weavers, circumstances do not permit them to put their children to any other trade; they have no money to bind them apprentices, or even to give them clothes to go to other work."

(This witness furnished a statement of average wages, marked "J. Brown, Knaresborough.")

John Dooker, a Weaver.

"I work for Mr. Thorpe. I am a single man. I work yard-wide diaper; it is about middling work, a yard wide 36 linen, a piece five days' work.

	s.	d.			
"Wages	9	3			
"Deduct loom standing	–	3			
"Dressing	–	3			
"Winding	1	3	2	–	net 7 *s.* 3 *d.*
"Candles	–	3			
Five days' work per week				8	8

"Perhaps if I had work on better sorts I could earn 1 *s.* a week more. The nominal wages are of very little consequence. The principal falling off is in the mode in which the work is required to be done. For instance, in a yard wide 36, four hanks more weft are put in now than 12 months ago. Perhaps the yarn is rather lighter, but still it requires more labour and more time. This is very generally the case now, therefore it is the same as a reduction in money.

"There is but one thing that would remedy the evil. I think it has got into every connexion in society, and I think every law affects the working men. I mean universal suffrage. If they were fully and properly represented in Parliament, they would have laws made for their benefit. At present very little regard is

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is paid to the working man. I think if there were a repeal of the corn laws, it would benefit us. The corn law increases the price of food and contracts labour. If we could export our goods the foreigners would cease to manufacture, and we should get their corn. Bread being lower, cloths would be purchased; there would be a more steady trade. There would be no panics to which we are now subject. The masters catch at a straw, they drag down the poor weavers to the last pinch. If we had the corn laws repealed and some controul put on machinery it would be the only remedy, and universal suffrage would be the means of obtaining it. I do not allude to the generality of masters, but there are some unprincipled persons who lower the wages, but there are some exceptions.

"I made an assertion of the reduction being not only nominal, but in time being increased; but there is an individual who will answer whether their work does not require more now than it did some years back. The generality of work takes more time now than it did formerly.

"When we had the Barnsley list we had a certain amount for a certain number of beers, although there are some instances where it is not the case; it would make a difference in the labour.

"I worked a yard wide for Mr. Simpson, 32 beers; they reduced it to 30 beers.

"Before we adopted the Barnsley list, some pieces were worked for sale, raw (unbleached); some bleached, those intended for bleaching had more put in than the others. When the Barnsley list was altered, the difference was more than the difference in labour."

Mr. Thomas Simpson, of the firm Walton, Oates & Simpson.

"The weavers are decidedly worse off than any other class of labourers. Scotch and Irish competition are the principal causes of our trade declining.

"Whenever we make any alteration requiring more labour, we make an agreement with the weaver, and make an allowance for it. It is frequently the case that a less quantity is put in, the difference in yarn is great; sometimes there are cases where it takes less weft. Sometimes the yarn is more bleached, being lighter more weft is put in."

The Knaresborough weavers show great inclination to educate their children, availing themselves of the excellent opportunities afforded by the several schools, which are numerous in proportion to the size of the town.

It is only occasionally that the Knaresborough weavers obtain any other employment, perhaps only in hay and harvest time, and that to a limited extent. Many weavers not kept there by family or other ties, are daily quitting Knaresborough to seek employment as weavers elsewhere.

At Darley, Hampsthwaite, Dacre, &c., the rate of wages are even lower than at Knaresborough. The weavers in these villages are in very great distress, and would be worse off than those in the town, but that they occasionally obtain harvest and other field-work, of which, however, only a few are capable. On the other hand, the weavers living in the country have not the advantages of charitable and other assistance afforded in the town.

Their dwellings, their clothing, and that of their children, evince great misery.

J. Reynard, a Weaver.

"There is often great distress among the weavers; frequently in slack times they must apply to the parish."

"Were it not for the greater facility of occasionally obtaining harvest-work, the weavers in the villages would certainly be much worse off than in Knaresborough. They pay rather more for all necessaries, and are not so likely to obtain charitable relief, or earn a trifle occasionally by odd jobs of work."

I visited an extensive linen factory at Westhouse, about 11 miles from Knaresborough, where many power-looms are employed, and will undoubtedly in a short time be adapted to almost all descriptions of linen weaving.

I continued my inquiry at Northallerton, Brompton, Osmotherly, Borrowby, and the neighbourhood, where, with few exceptions, the weavers suffer distress, occasioned by low wages and scarcity of employment. The amount of their earnings appears to depend in a great measure on the master for whom they work, not being regulated by any fixed rate. At Osmotherly, in particular, wages are very low. It is given in evidence that they are one-third lower than at Brompton; and, by a statement * furnished by the Osmotherly weavers, would not produce 7 *s.* a week. A statement † furnished from Hutton Rugby, a village at

* Appendix (E.) † Appendix (F.)

at no great distance, gives 9 *s.* 6 *d.* as an average of work per week done on 157 looms. Linen Weavers, Yorkshire.

At Brompton, the average wages taken on 249 looms will amount to about 8 *s.* per week, according to evidence and statements furnished by the weavers. The manufacturers, as is generally the case, disputing the accuracy of the calculation with regard to the number of hours required to finish a piece. Report of S. Keyser, Esq.

The weavers in the villages occasionally get work as agricultural labourers. They seem inclined to afford their children some education, but there is rather scarcity of Sunday or other schools, particularly at any distance from Northallerton.

The falling off in wages has been even greater in Northallerton, &c., than at places before mentioned; it is stated, that, on articles for which was paid,

	s.	*d.*	
Thirty years ago - - -	19	–	The present price is 12 *s.* 6 *d.*
Fifteen — - - -	15	–	
Seven — - - -	13	–	
Two — - - -	12	6	

Proceeding with the investigation at Darlington, &c., I found the rates of wages not differing materially from those of Northallerton and neighbourhood; but so great has been the decline of the linen trade at that place within a short time, that it can now scarcely be considered of much importance.

There have been several extensive failures of houses engaged in the manufacture of linen, which trade, now remaining in few hands, has caused a continual reduction in wages, very many hand-loom weavers being constantly out of employ and reduced to very great distress: an experienced weaver states his earnings at 7 *s.* 6 *d.* per week.

A manufacturer deposes to the condition of the weavers being much worse than that of other operatives; he further says,

"Many are thrown out of work for half their time. There is no demand for their labour; a weaver certainly cannot live on his wages, working 12 hours a day. They are generally sober, steady, industrious men, but with the best intentions at the present wages they cannot get a living. Many weavers are obliged to apply for parish assistance."

Several witnesses stated their earnings to be very trifling, from 3 *s.* 6 *d.* to 5 *s.* a week, but being old and very infirm men, it cannot be taken as a criterion.

As the evidence of Mr. Laidler, overseer of the poor, conveys a full description of the weavers general condition, I state it at length as follows:

"I have been manager of the poor for five years. The weavers are generally in great distress; I have many applications from them, very distressing cases. From five or six years experience, I know they are not idle men; in general they are a very industrious set of men. Many of the weavers' children are so much in want of clothes, that they cannot avail themselves of the Sunday and other free schools. I scarcely ever had an application for assistance from a weaver, but found it really a case of distress and a deserving object."

Similar evidence is given by the overseer at Aycliffe, a neighbouring village, as to the state of the weavers in his district; who says,

"The situation of the weavers is so bad, they should go to some other business. As weavers they are badly off. Much worse than other labourers. Many have left weaving, the able-bodied men are gone to the collieries and to rail-road work. Tweddle, overseer at Aycliffe.

"Not one weaver has applied for parochial relief, though in great distress. They all try to get employment at something else."

These statements of the miserable condition of the weavers in Darlington, &c., are fully confirmed by Mr. Backhouse, Mr. Pease and other gentlemen, who have favoured me with information on subjects connected with this inquiry.

So great has been the destitution of many weavers, that they have entirely relinquished their trade, and are seeking labour at any price on the roads, rail-roads, in the collieries, &c., but those who from age or infirmity have only the poor earnings of the loom by which to obtain their daily bread, are reduced to a state of the most wretched poverty.

The distress of the hand-loom linen weavers may be attributed in a great measure to the influx of goods of Scotch and Irish manufacture, particularly

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the former, at prices lower than the same articles could be produced in the manufactories in Yorkshire, even at the reduced wages. This applies principally to the lower descriptions of goods, but in every article the competition among manufacturers is very great, and has a constant tendency to the reduction of wages, and in every way injuriously affects the weavers.

Manufacturers as well as workmen are universally opposed to the corn laws; and, with scarcely an exception, attribute much of the distress to their operation, as will appear by the evidence in almost every page. The corn laws are considered to increase the price of provision, to limit our exports, and to induce the foreign manufacturer, by the introduction of machinery and the establishment of factories, to undersell us in every market. Opinions all tending to the same purport are variously given, one of which I cannot forbear to quote, viz.

"If I make a piece of cloth, and meet a Frenchman with a sack of corn on his back, I should be glad to exchange, but up steps a custom-house officer and won't let me, and I may eat my cloth if I can."

The introduction of power-looms is also generally considered by the weaver as very injurious, and a restriction of their use loudly called for.

Boards of trade are in the opinion of the weavers, if well regulated, likely to afford them great relief in cases where, from the alterations in work, &c. advantages may be taken by the manufacturers, and the weavers' earnings reduced, although no reduction in money takes place. I certainly think great advantages would arise from a well-constituted tribunal, to which an appeal could be made in cases of dispute on subjects of this nature, which it appears by the evidence are of frequent occurrence.

There is an opinion very prevalent among the weavers, that Government is not sincere in a wish to benefit their condition. This opinion is frequently expressed in the course of their evidence.

MACCLESFIELD.

Silk Weavers, Macclesfield.

I arrived at Macclesfield in the beginning of October, and commenced taking evidence on the general state of the hand-loom weavers in that town.

I found trade at the time pretty brisk, and the weavers generally employed, although about three months before at least one-third were waiting for work. This being frequently the case, it would not be unfair to allow one-third deduction from the amount of wages for the time lost in waiting.

The number of looms is stated in all at about 4,000.

Very few hand-loom cotton weavers.

No linen weaving.

There is a printed list of prices paid for weaving which is generally adhered to. There is a considerable difference in the earnings of the weavers, depending on the different quality of the materials, some causing more expense and delay in the preparation, &c. than others.

Taking first such descriptions as are considered the best sort of work:

Brocade (swivels), and jacquard weaving (figured silks.)

The wages on brocade will vary from 16 *s.* to 12 *s.*, averaging about 13 *s.* per dozen handkerchiefs; taking it at 13 *s.*, and that a man working 12 hours a day may weave 1 ¼ dozen in a week, it will give,

	s.	*d.*
1 ¼ dozen at 13 *s.*	16	3
From which a deduction is made in money for loom rent, &c.	5	–
Leaving net	11	3

The loom generally belongs to the manufacturer, and the deduction of 5 *s.* is made when the wages are paid. Another witness states the wages on weaving jacquard handkerchiefs called cravats, per dozen 9 *s.* 6 *d.* to 10 *s.* 6 *d.*

Taking

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	s.	d.
Taking 10 *s.* as an average, 1 ½ dozen per week - - - -	15	–
From which deduct for loom standing, &c., as above - - -	5	–
	10	–
Further deductions, s. d.		
Twisting in* - - - - - - - – 2		
Candles - - - - - - - – 4 } - - -	–	8
Entering (occasionally) say - - – 2		
Net - - -	9	4

Two tables were put in by a witness:

1. Showing the weavers' wages at different periods, commencing in 1793. Appendix (H.)
2. Comparative situation of hand-loom weavers and other labourers, as to wages, from 1793 to 1838. Appendix (I.)

On the subject of foreign competition in the silk trade, the following evidence is given:

"In 1826, on the 5th January, there was an introduction of foreign silks, and the reduction in duty operated considerably on the trade of Macclesfield. The competition at home was increased by competition from abroad. Still they continued deteriorating. French goods, &c. were imported to the injury of our trade. John Prout.

"The figure trade fell considerably, and the piece trade, because foreign piece goods were imported; they fell from 1*s.* 3*d.* to 7*d.*, and even more on some articles.

"Both manufacturers and labourers, by the application of the principles of free-trade, reduced the wages of labour without any equivalent in the price of provisions. Macclesfield has never recovered from that shock. Persian has fallen, from home competition. This is an article by which labourers did well; they were continued for many years, 3*d.* and 3½*d.* Country people then came into the town, and then the masters took advantage, and they put the Persian out into the country at reduced prices. They were reduced to 2½*d.*, 3*d.* and 2¾*d.* This is a most serious evil, and a bad prospect for us; we cannot regulate the country districts, and our wages are left to a competition. If the workmen did not endeavour to prevent it by unions they would be reduced to the greatest misery.

"In October 1826, I was employed to write a letter, and I can show that one piece of work was paid by one manufacturer 5*s.*

Some 6*s.* 6*d.*, others paid 7*s.* 6*d.*
— 6*s.* - - - - - - 8*s.*
— 5*s.* - - - - - - 7*s.* 6*d.*

"The dependent state of the poor weavers enabled the masters to take the advantage."

It appears that the weavers are very anxious for the establishment of local Boards to regulate prices of work. The following is extracted from evidence given on this subject:

"I consider local Boards would be a benefit. My reason for supposing it to be a benefit is this: The general excuse for reducing wages is, that others weave for less. Others make it for so much less, therefore you must work as low as they do. For instance, some years ago I did some work for a certain house of a description the price of which was not marked in the list; we took it by comparison with other work. The comparison would have given 6½*d.* per yard. When I took it home I asked that price; they thought 6*d.* sufficient. We reasoned the matter over; I convinced them 6½*d.* would be the real price; they paid it. I was asked whether others were made at Macclesfield; it was then found that they had been made for 6*d.*; ½*d.* was taken off, because others were doing it for less. On Persian, a low article, ½*d.* a yard could not be much to a retail dealer, whether he sold it for 4½*d.* or 5*d.*, but a matter of much importance to the weaver. It is in the wholesale business the competition lies. I can give an instance Thomas Kelly, a Weaver.

* Twisting in, which is requisite when a new harness is required, occurs most frequently in bad times, when there is a continual change of work.

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instance where lately (last Saturday) a retail dealer could afford to take off in a handkerchief I bought more than the whole wages for weaving.

"In the wholesale business, on many dozen yards 1*d.* a yard is material.

"To avoid this I recommend local Boards, extending over very large districts, composed of half weavers and half manufacturers, and their decision to be final. The chairman to have no casting vote. The prices as decided by them should be paid. With such a law we should have higher prices, and not be placed in a situation or in circumstances of working under price; we should have some measure to regulate wages."

Among many complaints made by the Macclesfield weavers of oppressive conduct and advantages taken on the part of the manufacturers, the deduction of what is called late money seems to have caused much dissatisfaction. This deduction is made from the wages of such weavers as bring home their work after a certain hour; and is said to be very unfairly levied, and enforced with partiality. On this point there was much conflicting evidence; the manufacturers maintaining that a sufficient time is allowed for all work to be brought in before the hour at which late money commences. Many of the weavers contradict this statement.

Power-loom weaving is also much complained of, as throwing many hands out of employ; and among the causes of distress, the corn laws are considered very material in raising the prices of food.

The weavers in Macclesfield also express their opinion that Government is not sincere in wishing to redress their grievances, or take measures for bettering their condition.

As to the general state of the hand-loom weavers at Macclesfield, judging from observation made at a time when, as before stated, trade was pretty brisk, I consider them more comfortably situated than in many other towns. They appear to be generally well-disposed, sober, and industrious, but their opinions and feeling towards their employers are much influenced by some leading men amongst their fellow-workmen.

The weavers generally avail themselves of the opportunities afforded for educating their children, and, with few exceptions, subscribe to benefit societies, several of which, it appears, have been established by weavers.

"There are a great number of benefit societies, and it is considered a disgrace not to belong to them. The weavers have established several institutions for burials of the dead. There are three or four burial societies, chiefly originating with weavers, one of 11,000, and one of 6,000 members; they pay ½ *d.* a week, some 1*d.* a week. On the death of wife or child, receive from 1*l.* to 4*l.* 10*s.* More than 9-10ths of the weavers subscribe to them. Many weavers contribute to sick clubs, they are mostly new societies."

During my limited stay in Macclesfield, I found some difficulty in procuring the attendance of the weavers on the days I had appointed to hear evidence. They complained of being taken by surprise, and not having their statements prepared. I was also obliged to postpone one meeting in consequence of the weavers preferring to spend a day in listening to the speeches of Messrs. F. O'Connor, Stephens, &c., promising to redress all their grievances, rather than afford me their evidence as to the existence and causes of such grievances.

Being called away to prepare for my Continental mission, I was under the necessity of leaving the town rather suddenly, and was succeeded by Mr. Fletcher, who will make some additional report on the remedies, &c. that may apply to the evils complained of by the hand-loom weavers of Macclesfield.

The moral condition of the weavers in general differs materially from that of other working classes; they are in a manner excluded from intercourse with society. Days and weeks pass over without a communication with any one but their neighbouring fellow workman or the foreman of a warehouse. The working carpenter, smith, mason, tailor, or shoemaker is in constant intercourse with men of various grades in society, often appealed to and consulted by those considerably his superiors in every respect. His ideas are enlarged, and

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and his general knowledge improved, thus fitting him in a measure to undertake some higher branch of employment in his own profession, or some occupation connected with it. The weaver, on the contrary, from 14 or 16 hours a day occupied at his loom in the same unvaried toilsome labour, no relaxation, no interest or excitement beyond the contemplation of his work as it proceeds, with regard only to the poor pittance it will furnish when completed; neither the force of example, nor any other cause operating as a stimulus to improvement, weavers will remain weavers, increasing in numbers from generation to generation,* striving to obtain a scanty subsistence by a trade, the knowledge of which is easily acquired, and to which children at an early age are from necessity devoted, improving only by the influence of increased facilities for education, and the consequent general advance of intellect. Thus, is the weaver employed under the most favourable circumstances when work can be obtained, but when from the want of it he is driven to idleness, the beer-shop offers an irresistible attraction, where the companionship of all the worst classes of his fellow sufferers serves completely to brutalize and render him desperate. His moral improvement can scarcely be expected, and the intelligence and the good conduct of the major part of this class is the more to be admired.

That improvidence prevails among the hand-loom weavers in a great degree cannot be denied. Though it could scarcely be expected that from their earnings (scanty in the best of times) any sum of importance could be laid by for a time of need, still there is good reason to suppose many do not profit by the opportunities which occasionally present themselves for making such provision, although but to a limited extent. On the contrary, a temporary improvement in the state of trade has too often led to carelessness, neglect, and sometimes even to dangerous excesses. Many good workmen by such conduct have lost their employment, and thus, by being for a time in comparative prosperity, have been finally reduced to the deepest distress.

It is only by the effect of pressing want, as exemplified in the case of the Darlington weavers, that those physically capable of doing any other work will gradually abandon the loom and improve their condition, by seeking and obtaining more profitable employment.

The practice of employing hand-loom weavers within the factories is generally on the increase; and the habits of a number of men working together at regular hours, under the eye of a master, must be improved: an advantage from which the weavers working at home are precluded.

With regard to education, I have already noticed the general inclination on the part of the parents to avail themselves of the means afforded them. Were it, however, in any way compulsory, it would but increase the complaints of the working classes against any authority exercised to enforce it, and the ignorant would only consider that, in compelling their children to attend schools, time, which might be employed in obtaining a livelihood, would be taken up to supply them with learning and deprive them of food.

I am convinced that the increasing desire to give their children education is sufficient for the purpose of universally spreading that benefit; and the working classes, the weavers in particular, are well aware that advancement in the knowledge obtained for their children must, in the course of time, have great effect in bettering their moral and physical condition; increasing their habits of industry, and affording them the means of supporting themselves in a way less dependent on the circumstances and fluctuations that have hitherto caused their distress.

In

* A numerous family, which to a man otherwise employed would be considered an incumbrance and increasing his difficulties, is rather a source of consolation to the poor weaver, whose children, when about eight or nine years of age, are capable of earning nearly sufficient to pay for their maintenance. This consideration induces early marriages, and generally large families.

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In witnessing the excellent and daily multiplying institutions by which the poorer classes are gratuitously, or, at a very trifling expense, enabled to attain this desirable object, and the eagerness with which even the most abject and ignorant parents avail themselves of this advantage for their children, I am fully convinced that compulsory education, so far from promoting the purposes aimed at, would only create dissatisfaction and disgust in parents as well as children. The anxious desire of the former is fully sufficient to effect the attendance of the latter at such schools and such times as may best suit their habits and opinions.

Tests of proficiency will be self evident. Enforcing attendance is by no means advisable. The desire for obtaining education, as already observed, is sufficient for that purpose; compulsion, or rigid rules of any kind, would serve only to check so laudable a disposition.

I have endeavoured, whenever practicable, to procure the attendance of master manufacturers at the public investigation, and am convinced their presence has materially contributed to prevent exaggeration or mis-statement on the part of the workmen. The testimony of the masters has also been open to contradiction on the part of the men.

In perhaps deviating from the usual course by frequently noting evidence taken in my casual visits, at the weavers' dwellings, &c., I have done so from an opinion that those examinations were the best calculated to elicit the truth, and I have been confirmed in this opinion by noticing that in many cases the same individual, when coming to depose in open court, has materially differed from the statements previously made to me when taken unprepared, and in some instances ignorant of the object of my inquiry; and whenever a discrepancy of this kind has occurred, the evidence in public court (frequently interrupted, but always evidently influenced by the presence of some delegate or constituted authority), has represented the situation of the weavers much worse, and their grievances of a more distressing nature than stated in their private communications. It is also worthy of remark, that in lengthened examinations in court several witnesses, who came forward to give evidence, replied to the same or similar questions in precisely the same words, and sometimes made exactly the same speeches, in order to have them publicly reported.

My own opinion or suggestions, as to any legislative enactments likely to provide a remedy for the evils complained of by the hand-loom weavers, will, I fear, be found very defective. Unable to propose any measure not already abundantly discussed, I have avoided a repetition of such dissertations, well assured that those subjects will be more fully digested and more ably treated by others better qualified than myself for such a task.

I have the honour to be, gentlemen,
Your most obedient servant,
S. Keyser.

APPENDIX to Report on Linen Weavers, *Yorkshire.*

Appendix (A.)

TO the Queen's Commissioners on the Hand-Loom Business.

Gentlemen,

The following is the average wages of 194 men, as near as we have been able to collect, exclusive of many women, who work at the canvas business; had we taken them into account, it would have been considerably less:

194 men, 7*s.* 4½*d.* a week for 12 months.
They have - 131 wives,
And - - 323 children.

In the whole - 648 persons; which gives an allowance of 2*s.* 2½*d.* per head for victuals, clothing, house-rent, fire, candles, and all other necessaries. We have not had access to the manufacturers' books, but there are three of the firms in the town that we believe a correct account of, and they are very near the general average of the whole.

If you go to the manufacturers, they will no doubt point out some that make the greatest wages; those most likely have been fully employed, and have wrought 14, 15, or 16 hours a day;

a day; and there are men who take out work in their own name for two, three, and as far as five looms, which will make their wages appear very good; for instance, there is one man that gave his earnings for the year at 112*l.*, but he has five looms.

The wages in the manufacturers' books you will find one-fourth more than we have given them here, for the weaver has to pay 2*d.* out of every 1*s.* for winding, and his own shuttle, bobbins, oil, candles, and shop-rent to pay, which will at the least take one-fourth out of what he receives at the warehouse. Besides these expenses, he has to carry many a heavy load, or otherwise hire a cart. Some of the men have at least to go two miles to the warehouse, and if we take a bag in as a sample, the warp and weft will weigh above 80 pounds, which he has to carry home and weave, the warp being 100 yards long, and then to take back, for which he will get 4*s.* 6*d.* when he has paid winding, &c.; but it often happens at some of the warehouses, that he has to go many times before he gets the whole.

There are many causes that have been at work in bringing the hand-loom weavers' wages to this starvation price, and we will beg leave to state our opinion of a few of them. The power-loom is one, and though but little progress has yet been made in working linen goods, yet, by having nearly destroyed the cotton weaving, and greatly injured the stuff and woollen weavers' trade, it has driven many out of those branches into the linen trade, and overstocked the market with hands; and the manufacturers have taken the advantage, and reduced the wages; but we believe it is nothing to their profit. Now, these power-looms contribute nothing to the revenue; on the contrary, they have been the means of throwing great numbers out of employment, and has brought thousands and tens of thousands to sup the cup of misery even to its very dregs, and, if not speedily checked, will, ere long, bring the whole of the weaving trade to complete ruin. We think at any rate the power-loom ought to pay as much as the hand-loom weaver pays, and then we should have some chance of competing with them. Besides the many indirect taxes that we have to pay to the Government, we have other taxes of a still more grievous nature, and, it is said by many writers, of far greater amount. These taxes cut like a two-edged sword; it is not only the great amount that we have to pay, but at the same time it greatly injures our trade. This tax is what they call "protecting duties" to the great landed property men of this country, not only the heavy duty on corn, but on every necessary of life, even to an egg.

Thus, while the manufacturing and labouring population are borne down by heavy taxation, the landed interest are greatly benefited by it. If the trade in provisions be not thrown open, either altogether or allowed to come in on paying a reasonable fixed duty, we are certain that both the Continent of Europe and America will soon manufacture all they want; we shall then have nothing but our home trade and our colonies to work for; and our home trade is greatly injured by the starvation wages given to many millions of working-men, reckoning their families altogether, who are now debarred a sufficient quantity of the common necessaries of life, and for buying new clothing they have little chance. Thus does our Government overlook the best customers that trade could have. And further, if we are rightly informed, that though corn is nearly prohibited coming from the Continent, yet German linens and other manufactured goods are allowed to be imported into this country by paying a small duty; and though some things may not be for this country's consumption, they are allowed to be sent to our colonies, which otherwise would be supplied by our own manufacturers. Besides this, a great part of the cotton, linen, and worsted yarn that is spun here has been allowed to go unwoven into other countries. But the French seem determined to do without our linens altogether. Surely this will make our Parliament relax their unjust provision taxes, so that we may barter our manufactured goods for the necessaries of life. The threshing machine caused many of the labourers of England to turn poachers, as they were robbed of their winter employment, and we are sorry to say that often in revenge did things of a far more criminal nature; and what the consequence will be of throwing so many thousands either out of employment or starving on the miserable pittance given them for their labour, owing to the use of so much machinery, that takes away man's labour, we cannot say. As for the prospect that the producers of all wealth has before them, it is miserable; they seem to be doomed to labour for a mere trifle as long as they are able, and then to pine away the remainder of their days in one of the new poor-law bastiles. These are a few of the many grievances we have to complain of, and we see no prospect of any redress so long as we are deprived of the right of having a share in the choice of those who make the laws; as it is, we are nothing but aliens in our own native land.

App. to Linen Weavers, Yorkshire.

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Appendix (B).

Average Wages, Barnsley, according to Richardson's Statement agreed to by the Weavers.

4 pieces	- -	50 days.	
16	- - -	142	
2	- - -	18	
2	- - -	16	
8	- - -	58	
6	- - -	27	
2	- - -	12	
8	- - -	38	
6	- - -	24	
2	- - -	6	
2	- - -	18	
8	- - -	52	
		144	

6 pieces	- -	43 days.	
8	- - -	50	
6	- - -	36	
10	- - -	65	
8	- - -	43	
8	- - -	48	
6	- - -	51	
6	- - -	69	
6	- - -	80	
6	- - -	52	
8	- - -	101	
		1,099	

By this calculation, it appears that the gross wages being 12*s.* 8*d.* per piece, a man must work seven days and seven hours to earn 12*s.* 8*d.* gross; taking the average of work and wages, the deductions for winding, rent, dressing, &c., may be taken at to from the above amount.

	s.	*d.*	
	12	8	seven days, seven hours.
Per week - -	10	–	
Net - - - -	7	11	

per seven days and seven hours; or seven and a half days.
Deducting for winding, &c., 2*s.* 1*d.* per week.

Joseph Slater, Smithies.

63 inch union - - 58 beers - - 8*s.* 9*d.*

Out.	Brought in.		
7 July - - -	16 July - -	27 July - -	16
18 June - - -	27 June - -	7 July - -	19
30 May - - -	9 June - -	16 June - -	16
25 April - - -	23 May - -	30 May - -	35
11 April - - -	18 April - -	25 April - -	14
27 March - - -	4 April - -	11 April - -	15
14 March - - -	21 March - -	27 March - -	15
28 February - -	7 March - -	14 March - -	14

81 inch union P. - - 91 beers - - 14*s.*
10 February - - 21 February - - 28 February.

$\frac{9}{4}$ sheeting 5 rees - - 64 beers - - 12*s.*
18 January - - 27 January - - 3 February.

One or two journeymen, and sometimes wife weaves; children wind; 2*d.* in the 1*s.*

William Dickinson, Worstro' Com.

72 inch union 1 - - 66 beers - - 10*s.*

28 July - - -	4 August - - -	11 August.
12 July - - -	21 July - - -	28 July.
26 June - - -	6 July - - -	12 July.
14 June - - -	21 June - - -	26 June.

63 inch union, no. 1 - - 58 beers - - 8*s.* 9*d.*

6 June - - -	9 June - - -	13 June.
28 May - - -	2 June - - -	6 June.
17 May - - -	24 May - - -	28 May.

72 inch union, 1 - - 66 beers - - 10*s.*

5 May - - -	12 May - - -	17 May.

76 inch union, 2 - - 78 beers - - 11*s.* 6*d.*

26 April - - -	2 May - - -	5 May.
18 April - - -	21 April - - -	25 April.
7 April - - -	14 April - - -	18 April.
27 March - - -	4 April - - -	7 April.

68 inch union, 2 - - - 70 beers - - 10*s.* 6*d.*

21 March	24 March	27 March.

72 inch union, 1 - - 66 beers - - 10*s.*

3 March	10 March	21 March.

¾ duck, 1, 2 - - 28 ½ beers - - 5*s.* 3*d.*

27 February	All the warp brought in 3d March.	
21 February	24 February	27 February.
10 February	17 February	21 February.
3 February	both ends	10 February.

Benj. Wroe, Royston.

Weaves a warp of dk. per week for 10 years or more, 5*s.* 3*d.* average; an independent freeholder.

A strong boy weaves a bunt of dbt. per week, 30 beers, 9*s.* 3*d.* Joseph Woodcock's (Royston) boy.

John Taylor's journeyman, Park-row.

38 inch heavy linen, 16 w & w III. - 44 beers - 9*s.* 6*d.*

6 August	11 August	18 August.
23 July	28 July	4 August.
7 July	14 July	21 July.
23 June	30 June	7 July.

Michael Goodlaff, son 13 years old, Wood-street.

¾ hank, 3 - - - 26 beers - - - 5*s.* 9*d.*

3 August	11 August	16 August.
20 July	28 July	3 August.
7 July	14 July	20 July.

Benj. Smeaton's boy, 14 years old, Wood-street.

¾ hank, 1 beer - - - 36 beers - - - 8*s.*

23 July	28 July	4 August.
9 July	14 July	21 July.
23 June	30 June	7 July.
11 June	16 June	23 June.

Abraham Tennant, boy, Smithies.

F. ⅝ diap. 80 (8 treadles) - 26 beers - 5*s.* 9*d.*

2 August	15 August	18 August.
23 July	28 July	2 August.
13 July	21 July	23 July.

John Wild, journeyman, Spring-row.

32 inch linen V. - - 39 beers - - 8*s.*

1 August	8 August	15 August.
19 July	25 July	1 August.
6 July	12 July	18 August.
20 June	27 June	5 July.
9 June	16 June	20 June.

John Derby (daughter), Spring-row.

32 inch linen R. - - 32 beers - - 6*s.* 6*d.*

8 August	13 August	17 August.
28 July	4 August	8 August.
14 July	21 July	28 July.
5 July	12 July	14 July.

Michael Goodlaff, Wood-street.

¾ diap. 39 - - - 53 beers - - - 11*s.* 3*d.*

30 July	4 August	10 August.
18 July	25 July	28 July.
5 July	12 July	18 July.
16 June	23 July	30 July.

App. to Linen Weavers, Yorkshire.

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William Richardson, How, Wilson's-piece.

$\frac{7}{4}$ diap. 45	62 beers	13 *s.* 9 *d.*
6 July	14 July	21 July.
16 June	27 June	5 July.
30 May	9 June	16 June.

George Hopkins, Wilson's-piece.

$\frac{8}{4}$ diap. 255, 4 dw.	80 beers	23 *s.* 3 *d.*
19 July	1 August	8 August.
18 June	30 June	18 July,
28 May	9 June	16 June.

George Hopkin (13 days to a bunt).

$\frac{8}{4}$ diap. 95, 6 div.	111 beers	43 *s.*
23 July	4 August	15 August.
6 July	19 July	July.
14 April	5 May	18 May.

Schofield, Smithies.

$\frac{10}{4}$ dam. 6^{61}	155 beers, 5 leaf	2 *s.* per yard.
9 July	21 July	4 August.
15 May	2 June	5 July.
9 March - resting	31 March - resting	11 May.

Thomas Sunderland, Dodworth.

$\frac{10}{4}$ G. G.	165, 8 leaf	2 *s.* 5 *d.*
13 June	7 July	4 August.
25 April	12 May	13 June.
20 January	21 March	27 April.
30 May	16 June	18 July.

James Sykes, Wood-street.

$\frac{10}{4}$ 50	75 beers	14 *s.* 3 *d.*
23 July	4 August	11 August.
6 July	14 July	21 July.
9 June	20 June	27 June.

John Naylor, Park-row.

$\frac{10}{4}$ y x	128	30 *s.*
5 July	19 July	30 July.
31 May	14 June	25 June.
5 May	19 May	31 May.
7 April	21 April	2 May.

Thomas Sunderland.

$\frac{12}{4}$ z	180	51 *s.* 6 *d.*
5 April	25 April	5 May.
15 March	27 March	4 April.

	Pieces.	Wages.
18 August	198	£. 119
11 August	149	91
4 August	172	123
28 July	149	86
21 July	168	112
14 July	148	82
7 July	121	87
		£. 700

Twelve shillings and eight pence per piece average gross wages from the warehouse, requiring, as calculated, seven days and seven hours labour, Barnsley average.

App. to Linen Weavers, Yorkshire.

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Appendix (C.)

ARRANGED LIST OF PRICES.

Knaresborough, 22 April 1836.

N.B.—The lengths of the warps mentioned, viz., 124 and 126 yards, are for two pieces, and the prices quoted are for one piece. Any longer or shorter lengths to be paid in proportion.

Any sets made betwixt those mentioned in this List to be paid in proportion.

Towelling.

124 Yards of Yarn.

Beers.	£.	s.	d.
10	–	3	2
12	–	3	4
14	–	3	8
16	–	3	11
18	–	4	3
20	–	4	6
22	–	4	9
24	–	5	1

Linens.

27 In.—124 Yards of Yarn.

Beers.	£.	s.	d.
20	–	5	–
22	–	5	3
24	–	5	6
26	–	5	10
28	–	6	2
30	–	6	6
32	–	7	1
34	–	7	5
36	–	7	9
38	–	8	4
40	–	9	–

3*d.* extra for one beer more, 28 inches.

30 Inches.—124 Yards of Yarn.

Beers.	£.	s.	d.
28	–	7	6
30	–	8	–
32	–	8	4
34	–	8	8
36	–	9	–
38	–	9	3
40	–	9	11
42	–	10	4
44	–	10	9
46	–	11	6
48	–	12	1
50	–	12	8
52	–	13	6
54	–	14	3
56	–	15	–
58	–	15	9
60	–	16	6
62	–	17	4
64	–	18	3
66	–	19	2
68	1	–	2
70	1	1	–
72	1	2	–

Linens—*continued.*

32 Inches.—124 Yards of Yarn.

Beers.	£.	s.	d.
30	–	8	4
32	–	8	8
34	–	9	–
36	–	9	3
38	–	9	7
40	–	9	11
42	–	10	3
44	–	10	10
46	–	11	6
48	–	12	1
50	–	12	8
52	–	13	4
54	–	14	2
56	–	14	10
58	–	15	8
60	–	16	5
62	–	17	2
64	–	18	–
66	–	18	11
68	–	19	10
70	1	–	9
72	1	1	8

Sheetings.

34 Inches.—124 Yards of Yarn.

Beers.	£.	s.	d.
16	–	5	7
18	–	5	11
20	–	6	2
22	–	6	6
24	–	6	9
26	–	7	–
28	–	7	3
30	–	7	7
32	–	7	11
34	–	8	2
36	–	8	5
38	–	8	8
40	–	9	–
42	–	9	7
44	–	10	1
46	–	10	9
48	–	11	3
50	–	11	10
52	–	12	5
54	–	12	11
56	–	13	6
58	–	14	1
60	–	14	8

3*d.* extra for 36 inches up to 34 beers inclusive; 6*d.* extra for 36 inches up to 50 beers; and 9*d.* extra up to 70 beers.

Sheetings—*continued.*

38 Inches.—124 Yards of Yarn.

Beers.	£.	s.	d.
30	–	8	5
32	–	8	8
34	–	9	–
36	–	9	4
38	–	9	7
40	–	9	10
41	–	10	1
42	–	10	5
44	–	11	1
46	–	11	6
48	–	12	1
50	–	12	8
52	–	13	3
54	–	13	9
56	–	14	4
58	–	14	11
60	–	14	5
62	–	16	–
64	–	16	7
66	–	17	2
68	–	17	8
70	–	18	3
72	–	18	10
74	–	19	5

3*d.* extra for 40 inches up to 38 beers inclusive; and 6*d.* extra up to 50 beers; and 9*d.* extra up to 74 beers.

5-4ths. In.—124 Yds. of Yarn.

Beers.	£.	s.	d.
38	–	10	8
40	–	11	3
42	–	11	6
44	–	11	10
46	–	12	4
48	–	13	–
50	–	13	6
52	–	14	–
54	–	14	8
56	–	15	2
58	–	15	9
60	–	16	4
62	–	16	10
64	–	17	6
66	–	18	–
68	–	18	7
70	–	19	2
72	–	19	8
74	1	–	3
76	1	–	10
78	1	1	6
80	1	2	–

(*continued*)

App. to Linen Weavers, Yorkshire.

Report of S. Keyser, Esq.

SHEETINGS—*continued.*

Beers.	£.	s.	d.
82	1	2	6
84	1	3	8

5-4ths cotton warp, up to 42 beers, 9*d.* per bunt less than linen, and 1 *s.* less up to 50 beers; 9-8ths to be paid in proportion.

6-4ths. In.—124 Yds. of Yarn.

Beers.	£.	s.	d.
50	–	13	9
52	–	14	3
54	–	14	8
56	–	15	–
58	–	15	6
60	–	16	–
62	–	16	6
64	–	16	10
66	–	17	5
68	–	18	–
70	–	18	7
72	–	19	2
74	–	19	8
76	1	–	3
78	1	–	10
80	1	1	5
82	1	1	11
84	1	2	6
86	1	3	2
88	1	3	8
90	1	4	2
92	1	4	9
94	1	5	4
96	1	5	11
98	1	6	9
100	1	7	6
102	1	8	6
104	1	9	3
106	1	10	2
108	1	11	–
110	1	11	9

8-4ths In.—124 Yds. of Yarn.

Beers.	£.	s.	d.
50	–	12	1
52	–	12	4
54	–	12	8
56	–	13	–
58	–	13	6
60	–	14	1
62	–	14	7
64	–	15	3
66	–	15	9
68	–	16	4
70	–	16	11
72	–	17	5
74	–	18	–
76	–	18	7
78	–	19	1
80	–	19	8
82	1	–	3
84	1	–	10
86	1	1	5
88	1	1	11
90	1	2	6
92	1	3	1
94	1	3	8
96	1	4	3
98	1	4	9
100	1	5	4

7-4ths to be paid in proportion to 8-4ths.

SHEETINGS—*continued.*

10-4ths.—124 Yards of Yarn.

Beers.	£.	s.	d.
60	–	14	–
62	–	14	5
64	–	14	8
66	–	14	11
68	–	15	2
70	–	16	4
72	–	16	8
74	–	16	10
76	–	17	3
78	–	17	8
80	–	18	–
82	–	18	7
84	–	19	1
86	–	19	9
88	1	–	3
90	1	–	10
92	1	1	5
94	1	2	–
96	1	2	6
98	1	3	1
100	1	3	8
102	1	4	3
104	1	4	9
106	1	5	4
108	1	6	6
110	1	7	–
115	1	8	6
120	1	10	4
122	1	11	9
125	1	13	4
127	1	14	10
130	1	16	7
132	1	18	3
135	2	–	–
140	2	1	8
143	2	3	4
145	2	5	–
150	2	8	5
155	2	11	10
160	2	15	–
166	2	18	7
170	3	2	–

12-4ths.—124 Yards of Yarn.

Beers.	£.	s.	d.
96	1	7	4
100	1	8	5
104	1	9	7
108	1	10	8
110	1	11	3
112	1	12	–
115	1	13	3
120	1	14	10
122	1	15	9
125	1	16	10
130	1	18	10
132	1	19	4
134	2	–	–
138	2	1	1
142	2	2	3
145	2	3	4
150	2	5	7
155	2	7	10
160	2	10	8
164	2	12	4
168	2	14	–
172	2	16	4
176	2	18	7
180	3	–	9
185	3	2	6
190	3	4	6

SHEETINGS—*continued.*

Beers.	£.	s.	d.
195	3	6	6
200	3	8	8
205	3	10	5
210	3	13	3
234	4	2	9

11-4ths paid in proportion to 12-4ths.

DUCKS.

3-4ths.—Duck Length.

Beers.	£.	s.	d.
21 and 22	–	4	–
23 and 24	–	4	3
25 and 26	–	4	6
27 common	–	4	9
27 middle	–	5	–
28 best	–	5	6
30 ditto	–	6	–
32 ditto	–	6	6
29 ditto, 29 inches	–	5	6

4-4ths.—124 Yards of Yarn.

Beers.	£.	s.	d.
31 common	–	8	4
35 ditto	–	9	–
35 middle	–	9	3
37 common	–	9	3
37 middle	–	9	7
37 best	–	9	11
39 best, fine	–	10	3
41 - ditto	–	10	10
43 - ditto	–	11	6

1 *s.* less for 7-8ths.

9-8ths.—124 Yards of Yarn.

Beers.	£.	s.	d.
39 common	–	10	3
39 best	–	10	6
41 middle	–	10	6
41 heavy	–	11	1
43 best fine	–	11	6
43 heavy	–	11	9
46 fine	–	12	1
48 ditto	–	12	8

5-4ths.—124 Yards of Yarn.

Beers.	£.	s.	d.
48	–	13	8

STRIPES.

124 Yards of Yarn.

Beers.	£.	s.	d.
27 27 inches	–	7	9
28 28 ditto	–	8	–
30 30 ditto	–	8	9
35 30 ditto	–	10	6
36 36 ditto	–	10	6

6 *d.* more for cotton weft; 6 *d.* lass for cotton warp.

Cranky.

124 Yards of Yarn.

Beers.	£.	s.	d.
28 inches	–	10	6
31 ditto	–	11	9
34 ditto	–	13	–
36 ditto	–	13	8

Strainers.

124 Yards of Yarn.

Beers.	£.	s.	d.
5-8ths	–	5	6
3-4ths	–	6	1
7-8ths	–	6	8
4-4ths	–	7	5
9-8ths	–	8	4
5-4ths	–	9	3

Plain Glass Cloths.

124 Yards of Yarn.—5-8ths.

Beers.	£.	s.	d.
19	–	4	8
20	–	5	–
22	–	5	3
24	–	5	6

3-4ths.

Beers.	£.	s.	d.
22	–	5	3
24	–	5	6
26	–	5	10
28	–	6	6
30	–	6	9
32	–	7	2
34	–	7	4
36	–	7	9
38	–	8	–
40	–	8	4
42	–	8	8
44	–	9	–
46	–	9	3

Figured glass cloths 6 *d.* per bunt more.

Drabbetts.

124 Yards of Yarn.

Beers.	£.	s.	d.
29	–	10	9
31	–	11	3
36	–	12	4
41	–	14	8
44	–	15	9

Mock Ticks.

124 Yards of Yarn.

Beers.	£.	s.	d.
16	–	5	8
20 and 21	–	5	10
23	–	6	3
25	–	6	5
27	–	6	9

Mock Ticks—*continued.*

6-4ths.

Beers.	£.	s.	d.
31 and 32	–	10	2
34 and 35	–	10	4
36 and 37	–	10	8
38 and 39	–	10	11
40 and 41	–	11	3
42 and 43	–	11	6
44 and 45	–	11	10

3-Leaved Grey Ticks.

126 Yards of Yarn.

Beers.	£.	s.	d.
21	–	8	–
22 and 23	–	8	7
26 and 27	–	9	9
30	–	10	3
33	–	10	11
35	–	12	7
37	–	13	2
39	–	13	9
42	–	14	10
45	–	16	–
48	–	17	2
51	–	17	9
54	–	18	10
57	1	–	–
60 and 63	1	2	11
66	1	4	–
69	1	5	2
72 4-4ths	1	6	4
75 ditto	1	8	–

Cotton warp same price; 1 *s.* 8 *d.* extra for blue and white up to 48 beers inclusive; and 2 *s.* 3 *d.* for all upwards.

4-Leaved Grey Ticks.

126 Yards of Yarn.

Beers.	£.	s.	d.
48	–	18	10
52	1	–	–
56	1	2	4
60	1	4	6
62	1	5	2
66	1	6	4
69	1	7	6
72	1	8	7
72 4-4ths	1	8	7
80 ditto	1	10	4
84 ditto	1	11	6

Cotton Warp same price; 1 *s.* 8 *d.* extra for blue and white up to 48 beers inclusive; and 2 *s.* 3 *d.* for all upwards.

27 inches, 3-leaved Drills.

124 Yards of Yarn.

Beers.	£.	s.	d.
33	–	8	9
36	–	9	3
39	–	9	7
42	–	10	2

27 inches, 3-leaved Drills—*continued.*

Beers.	£.	s.	d.
45	–	11	2
48	–	11	9
51	–	12	5
54	–	13	4
57	–	13	11
60	–	14	3
63	–	15	6
66	–	16	1
69	–	17	4
72	–	18	–
75	–	18	8
78	–	19	2
81	–	19	11
84	1	1	3
87	1	2	3
90	1	3	–
93 50 leas.	1	6	8
96 60 leas.	1	7	9

27 inches, 5-leaved ditto.

Beers.	£.	s.	d.
33	–	9	4
36	–	9	11
39	–	10	3
42	–	10	10
45	–	11	9
48	–	12	6
51	–	13	4
54	–	14	3
57	–	15	–
60	–	15	6
63	–	16	1
66	–	17	4
69	–	18	8
72	–	19	11

Reed.	Beers.		£.	s.	d.
83	78	30 lea.	1	3	6
do.	do.	40 lea.	1	1	3
do.	do.	50 lea.	1	3	–
do.	do.	60 lea.	1	4	2
90	84	60 lea.	1	8	6
90	90	50 lea.	1	6	1
93 & 96	86	50 lea.	1	8	6
do.	do.	40 lea.	1	11	–
do.	do.	60 lea.	1	9	9
do.	do.	80 lea.	1	13	6
106	98	80 lea.	2	–	8
do.	do.	50 lea.	1	17	2
117	117	100 lea.	2	15	9

4-leaved paid same as 5, and 2 *s.* extra for all made extra heavy up to 80 beers; and all above 3 *s.* extra.

Bleached drills, 29 inches, the same as grey 27 inches.

Huckabacks and Diapers.

3-4ths.—124 Yards of Yarn.

Beers.	£.	s.	d.
18	–	5	11
20	–	6	2
22	–	6	5
24	–	6	9
26	–	7	–
28	–	7	4
30	–	7	7
32	–	8	5

(*continued*).

Appendix to Linen Weavers, Yorkhire.

Report of S. Keyser, Esq.

HUCKABACKS AND DIAPERS —*continued.*

Beers.	£.	s.	d.
34	–	8	9
36	–	9	3
38	–	9	10
40	–	10	5
42	–	11	3
44	–	11	6
46	–	12	1
48	–	12	8
50	–	13	3
52	–	13	9
54	–	14	4
56	–	15	2
58	–	15	9
60	–	16	4
62	–	17	2
64	–	18	–
66	–	18	10
68	–	19	8
70	1	–	6

4-4ths.

Beers.	£.	s.	d.
30	–	8	9
32	–	9	–
34	–	9	3
36	–	9	6
38	–	10	2
40	–	10	8
42	–	11	3
44	–	11	10
46	–	12	4
48	–	13	–
50	–	13	6
52	–	14	–
54	–	14	8
56	–	15	2
58	–	15	9
60	–	16	4
62	–	16	10
64	–	17	6
66	–	18	–
68	–	18	6
70	–	19	2
72	–	19	8
74	1	–	3
76	1	–	10
78	1	1	4
80	1	2	–
82	1	2	6

5-4ths.

Beers.	£.	s.	d.
44	–	11	6
45	–	11	10
47	–	12	4
49	–	13	–
51	–	13	6
53	–	14	–
55	–	14	8
57	–	15	2
59	–	15	9
61	–	16	4
63	–	16	10
65	–	17	6
67	–	18	–
69	–	18	6
71	–	19	3
74	–	19	8

HUCKABACKS AND DIAPERS —*continued.*

Beers.	£.	s.	d.
76	1	–	3
78	1	–	9
80	1	1	5

6 *d.* extra when worked with cotton weft, or made duck huckabacks.

6 *d.* per piece less for unions.

5-8ths and 32 inches, for the same number of beers as 3-4ths, to be paid the same price.—8 treadles, 6 *d.* more than 4; 10 treadles, 6 *d.* more than 8; 12 treadles, 6 *d.* more than 10; 14 treadles, 1 *s.* more than 12; 16 treadles, 1 *s.* more than 14.

7-8ths to be paid in proportion.

6-4ths, 2 Division.—Common Twill.—124 Yds. of Yarn.

Beers.	£.	s.	d.
33	–	10	3
36	–	10	6
38	–	10	9
40	–	11	2
42	–	11	5
44	–	11	9
46	–	12	1
48	–	12	4
50	–	12	9
52	–	13	4
54	–	13	11
56	–	14	7
58	–	15	2
60	–	15	10
62	–	16	5
64	–	17	–
66	–	17	8
68	–	18	3
70	–	18	11

5-4ths to be paid in proportion; and 1 *s.* extra for 3 Division. Cotton warp 6 *d.* per bunt less.

8-4ths.

Beer.	£.	s.	d.
56	–	16	1
58	–	16	8
60	–	17	4
62	–	17	8
64	–	18	–
66	–	18	3
68	–	18	7
70	–	18	11
72	–	19	6
74	1	–	5
76	1	1	5
78	1	2	3
80	1	3	6
82	1	4	6
84	1	5	5
86	1	6	4

HUCKABACKS AND DIAPERS —*continued.*

Beers.	£	s.	d.
88	1	7	3
90	1	7	10

Huckabacks same price.

7-4ths paid in proportion to 8-4ths, and 1 *s.* extra for 3 Division common twill.

Cotton warp 1 *s.* less.

6-4ths, 2 Division.—Satin Twill. —124 Yards of Yarn.

Beers.	£.	s.	d.
51 and 54	–	16	1
56	–	17	–
58	–	18	–
60	–	18	7
62	–	19	2
64	–	19	10
66	1	–	6
68	1	1	–
70	1	1	8

6-4ths, 3 Division.—Satin Twill.

Beers.	£.	s.	d.
51 and 54	–	18	–
56	–	18	10
58	–	19	10
60	1	–	6
62	1	1	–
64	1	1	9
66	1	2	3
68	1	3	–
70	1	3	6

8-4ths, 3 Division.—Satin Twill. —124 Yards of Yarn.

Beers.	£.	s.	d.
72	1	6	–
74	1	6	8
76	1	7	3
78	1	7	10
80	1	9	2
82	1	9	9
84	1	10	4
86	1	11	7
88	1	12	6
90	1	13	6
95	1	16	–
100	1	18	6
104	2	–	6
108	2	2	–
112	2	5	–
116	2	7	–

Huckabacks and Diapers—*continued.*

	£.	s.	d.
120 - - -	2	8	4
123 - - -	2	9	7

2 Division 1 *s.* 6 *d.* less than 3, and 4 Division 2 *s.* 6 *d.* more than 3.

3 *s.* 6 *d.* more for 5 Division, and 4 *s.* more for 6 Division.

7-4ths to be paid in proportion to 8-4ths.

10-4ths, 3 Division.—Satin Twill.

Beers.	£.	s.	d.
153 - - -	3	4	6

4 Division, ditto.

104 - - -	2	4	6

5 Division, ditto.

117 - - -	2	13	3

6 Division, ditto.

135 - - -	3	18	–

9-4ths to be paid in proportion.

Plain Unions.

124 Yards of Yarn.

	£.	s.	d.
25 inches 23 beers –	4	3	
ditto - 24 ditto –	4	6	
ditto - 25 ditto –	4	9	

3 *d.* extra for 26 inches, 1 beer more.

	£.	s.	d.
27 inches 24 beers –	4	6	
ditto - 26 ditto –	4	9	
ditto - 28 ditto –	5	1	
ditto - 30 ditto –	5	5	
ditto - 32 ditto –	5	10	

Plain Unions—*continued.*

Beers.	£.	s.	d.
27 inches 34 beers –	6	6	
ditto - 36 ditto –	7	–	
ditto - 38 ditto –	7	4	
ditto - 40 ditto –	7	10	

3 *d.* extra for 28 inches, 1 beer more; 6 *d.* extra for 30 inches.

	£.	s.	d.
34 inches 30 beers –	6	9	
ditto - 32 ditto –	7	–	
ditto - 34 ditto –	7	4	
ditto - 36 ditto –	7	7	
ditto - 38 ditto –	7	10	
ditto - 40 ditto –	8	2	
ditto - 42 ditto –	8	5	

6 *d.* extra for 36 inches

ditto - 36 in. to 38 in.
ditto - 36 in. to 40 in.

8-4ths.

	£.	s.	d.
58 beers - -	–	10	5
60 and 62 - -	–	11	3
64 and 66 - -	–	11	10
70 and 72 - -	–	12	2
74 and 76 - -	–	12	11

7-4ths paid in proportion to 8-4ths.

10-4ths.

	£.	s.	d.
82 beers - -	–	15	9

9-4ths to be paid in proportion to 10-4ths.

Knaresborough Linens.

92 Yards of Yarn.

	£.	s.	d.
30 inches 30 beers –	5	11	
ditto - 32 ditto –	6	2	
ditto - 34 ditto –	6	5	
ditto - 36 ditto –	6	8	

Knaresborough Linens—*continued.*

Beers.	£.	s.	d.
30 inches 38 ditto –	6	10	
ditto - 40 ditto –	7	4	

Any other sets to be paid in proportion.

Blue Linens.

110 Yards of Yarn.

Beers.	£.	s.	d.
30 - - -	–	7	9
32 - - -	–	8	–
34 - - -	–	8	3
36 - - -	–	8	6
38 - - -	–	8	9
40 - - -	–	9	–

Linen Checks.

	£.	s.	d.
Set 40 26 inches -	–	8	–
ditto 29 ditto -	–	8	9
ditto 29 ditto, best	–	9	–
ditto 32 ditto -	–	9	9
ditto 4-4ths ditto	–	10	3
ditto 36 inches -	–	10	9

When wrought through a 36 reed, 6 *d.* per bunt less.

All Linen Checks.

	£.	s.	d.
Set 38 36 inches -	–	11	–
ditto 9-8ths - -	–	11	9
ditto 6-4ths - -	–	13	4

Union Checks.

	£.	s.	d.
Set 49 32 inches -	–	8	9
ditto 44 ditto -	–	9	3
36 ditto -	–	9	9
9-8ths ditto -	–	11	6
6-4ths ditto -	–	12	3

When wrought through a 43 reed, 6 *d.* per bunt less.

Appendix to Linen Weavers, Yorkshire.

Report of S. Keyser, Esq.

Appendix (D.)

To the Inhabitants of Knaresborough.

We, the undersigned, having carefully examined a number of Lists of Prices, given by the first manufacturers in Barnsley, are decidedly in opinion, that the annexed List of Prices is a full average of the Wages given by them, and to which the Knaresborough manufacturers are ready to accede.

Robert Dearlove, *Roger Forster,*
William Coates, *Francis Cooper.*
Thomas Hawksworth,

Towellings—18 Inches.

Sets.	Beers.	Yards.	s. d.	Yards.	s. d.
—	11	44	3 9	50	4 3

Other Sets in proportion.

27 Inch Linens.

30	23 ½	44	5 6	50	6 3
34	27	„	6 –	„	7 –
38	31	„	6 9	„	7 9
42	35	„	7 3	„	8 3

28 Inches 3*d.* more each piece.

Knaresborough Linens Boned.

32	30 ½	40	- -	- -	7 –
34	32 ½	„	- -	- -	7 3
36	34	„	- -	- -	7 6
38	36	„	- -	- -	7 9
40	37 ½	„	- -	- -	8 3
42	40	„	- -	- -	8 9
44	42	„	- -	- -	9 3
46	44	„	- -	- -	9 9

4-4ths Sheetings, or 34 Inches.

24	24	44	6 4	50	7 3
28	28	„	6 10	„	7 10
34	34	„	7 6	„	8 6
38	38	„	8 3	„	9 3
42	42	„	9 3	„	10 6
46	45	„	10 –	„	11 6

When full 36 inches 3*d.* more each piece.

9-8ths Ditto, or 38 Inches.

24	28	48	8 3	50	8 6
28	32	„	8 9	„	9 3
32	35 ½	„	9 3	„	9 9
36	39 ½	„	9 9	„	10 3
40	43 ½	„	10 9	„	11 6
44	47 ½	„	12 –	„	12 6

When full 40 inches 4*d.* more each piece.

5-4ths Ditto.

33	41	44	10 6	50	11 9
36	45	„	11 3	„	12 6
40	49	„	12 –	„	13 6
44	53	„	12 9	„	14 3
47	57	„	13 6	„	15 –

6-4ths, 7-4ths, and 9-4ths in proportion.

10-4ths Sheetings, or 38 Inches.

88 beers	- -	6 ¾ *d.* per yard.
108 „	- -	7 ½ *d.* „
118 „	- -	8 ¼ *d.* „

5-8ths Diapers.

Beers.	Com. Pattern.	Yards.	s. d.
20 ½	- - - -	45	6 10
23	- - - -	„	7 8

3-4ths Ditto.

24	- - - -	45	8 –
27 ½	- - - -	„	8 3
30	- - - -	„	8 6

4-4ths Ditto.

36	- - - -	45	9 9
40	- - - -	„	10 8

6-4ths Ditto.

33	2 division - -	45	13 –
36	— - -	„	13 6
41	— - -	„	14 6
44	— - -	„	15 –
48	— - -	„	15 6
55	— - -	„	16 6
48	3 ditto - -	„	16 6
57	— - -	„	21 –
57	4 ditto - -	„	23 –

8-4ths Ditto.

77	3 division - -	45	26 –
90	— - -	„	35 –

Satin Twill.
Other divisions and sets in proportion.

5-8ths Huckabacks.

16	- - - -	44	5 9
20	- - - -	„	6 6

3-4ths Ditto.

Sets.	Beers.	Yards.	s. d.
22	18	44	6 6
30	24	„	7 3
35	27	„	8 –
38	31	„	8 6
44	35	„	9 –
50	42	„	10 6

4-4ths, 5-4ths, 6-4ths, &c. in proportion.

Ducks.

From 4*s.* 9*d.* to 6*s.* 3*d.*, according to set, quality, and material; each piece 37½ yards.

Blue Linens.

S	—	Yards.	*s.*	*d.*
36	27 in.	40	6	–
	31	,,	7	–
	35	,,	7	6
	39	,,	8	3

Ticks. 3 Leaf, 4 Leaf. Grey and blue Warp.

Sets.	Beers.	31 Inches wide.	
16 & 18	20 & 22½	2½ per yard.	
20	25	2¾	
24	30	3	
28	35	3½	
32	40	3¾	
34	42	3	4
36	45	4	4¾
40	50	4½	5
42	53	4	5¾
44	56	5	
48	62	5½	
40	65	5½	

When blue and white Warps, 1*s.* 6*d.* more on each piece for the lowest sets, and 2*s.* for the higher.

Brown Hessing.

Set.	—	Yards.	*s.*	*d.*
20	7-8s.	45	4	6
	4-4s.	,,	5	–
	9-8s.	,,	5	6
	5-4s.	,,	6	3
	6-4s.	,,	7	6

Other widths and sets in proportion.

Striped Beddings.

26	27	45	4	9
	28 in.	,,	5	–
	7-8s.	,,	5	6
	4-4s.	,,	6	–

Other sets in proportion.

* A Beer, or Portith, is 38 Threads of Warp; all description of Goods in this statement by the same number of Threads.

Price for Winding 20 hanks, 5*d.*

Appendix (E.)

A Correct List of Wages taken at *Osmotherley*, given by the Masters, 5 September 1838.
This is taken from one Beaming, 102 yards of Yarn in length.

Reeds.	Beers.	Length of Warp.	Number of Weft or Hanks.	Price of Winding.	WAGES.	Shop Rent, and other Expenses.	Day's Work in one Beaming, at 12 Hours per Day.	Neat Cash for One Beaming.
3-4th Drill, Light:				*s.* *d.*	£. *s.* *d.*	*s.* *d.*		£. *s.* *d.*
28	42	102	54	2 3	– 12 –	1 6	9 da. wk.	– 8 3 p. week 5/6
32	48	102	58	2 4½	– 13 –	1 6	9 —	– 9 1½ — 6/
36	54	102	60	2 6	– 14 –	1 6	9 —	– 10 – — 6/9
40	60	102	64	2 8	– 18 –	2 –	12 —	– 13 4 — 6/8
44	66	102	72	2 11	1 1 –	2 4	14 —	– 15 9 — 6/9
46	69	102	76	3 1	1 3 –	2 6	15 —	– 17 5 — 7/3
50	75	102	84	3 6	1 5 –	2 10	17 —	– 18 8 — 6/7
54	81	102	86	3 7	1 6 –	3 –	18 —	– 19 5 — 6/5
Heavy Drills:								
44	66	104	56	2 4	1 4 –	2 8	16 —	– 19 – — 7/2
50	75	104	58	2 5	1 8 –	3 –	18 —	1 2 7 — 7/6
58	107	104	70	2 11	1 12 –	3 4	20 —	1 5 9 — 7/8
3-4th Huckabacks:								
24	24	106	44	1 10	– 10 6	1 6	9 —	– 7 2 — 4/9
30	30	106	52	2 2	– 13 –	1 8	10 —	– 9 2 — 5/6
36	36	106	60	2 6	– 16 –	1 10	11 —	– 11 8 — 6/1
40	40	106	70	2 11	– 18 –	2 –	12 —	– 13 1 — 6/7
44	44	106	76	3 2	1 – –	2 2	13 —	– 14 7 — 6/3
46	46	106	79	3 3½	1 – –	2 4	14 —	– 14 4½ — 6/1

Number of looms - - - - - - - 70
Number of families - - - - - - - 40
Number of persons in those families - - - - 144
Young men without families, and boys - - - - 30
Assistants in winding - - - - - - 43

Appendix to Linen Weavers, Yorkshire.

Report of S. Keyser, Esq.

	£.	s.	d.
House rent for one year	4	–	–
Finding coals for one year	4	–	–
Total	£. 8	–	–

Sir,

We have given you a correct list of the Wages that can be earned at Osmotherley, with 12 hours per day labour. I hope that you will do every thing in your power to better our condition, as you will see by this statement that we cannot be well off.

Osmotherley, 5 September 1838.

I remain, &c.
Edward Thompson.

Appendix (F.)

In the list we have given we consider that a man to work 12 hours a day, of course allowing in those 12 hours sufficient time for his meals, that he can earn in a

		£.	s.	d.	
4-4ths	38 set	–	10	6	per week.
4-4ths	40 set	–	10	6	ditto.
4-4ths	44 set	–	11	3	ditto.
4-4ths	46 set	–	11	3	ditto.
4-4ths	48 set	–	12	–	ditto.
4-4ths	50 set	–	12	–	ditto.
4-4ths	52 set	–	12	–	ditto.
4-4ths	56 set	–	12	3	ditto.
4-4ths	58 set	–	12	3	ditto.
		£. 5	4	–	

	s.	d.
Average, per week	11	6½

And from the average of 11*s.* 6½*d.* per week, we must make the following deductions:—

	s.	d.		
Winding bobbins for weft	1	–		
Loom and rent	–	4		
Sizing, grease, candles, brushes, shuttle, &c.	–	8½		
			2	–½
Which make a man's real wages to average per week			9	6

(signed) *Robinson & Wilson*
Thomas Sedgwick.
John Sedgwick.

To Mr. *S. Keyser*, Assistant-commissioner, Hand-loom Inquiry.

Hutton Rudby, Cleveland, Yorkshire,
6 September 1838.

Sir,

We, the undersigned operative weavers in this district, corroborate the enclosed statement from our master manufacturers, and which we consider to be as truthful an average wage as it is possible to attain.

(signed)

James Eland.
John Douglas.
Thomas Seymour.
Richard Jowsey.
John Jowsey.
William Sidgwick.
Francis Stainthorp.
Thomas Sadler.
William Seymour.
John Sidgwick.
John Jackson.
Stephen Calvert.
John Seymour.
Thomas Biggins.
Matthew Richardson.
Robert Dathiny.

Appendix to Linen Weavers, Yorkshire.

Report of S. Keyser, Esq

Appendix (G.)

LIST of DAY and SUNDAY SCHOOLS in *Knaresborough.*

Boys, National	150	Usually attend, 100 to 150.
Girls, National	100	
Infant School	120	
Two Royal Schools (Miss Stevens')	84	
School of Industry - - ditto	64	
Charity School (High-street)	30	
Mrs. Slingsby's School, at Scriven	40	Grammar School, free for learning certain things.

In the first three, each child pays 1*d.* a week.

SUNDAY SCHOOLS.

Church, Sunday	Boys	120	
Ditto	Girls	70	
Miss Stevens'	Girls	127	
Methodist, Sunday	Boys and Girls	230	
Independent, ditto	ditto	100	
Roman-catholic, ditto	ditto	130,	80 to 100 usually attending.

CHARITIES.

Dispensary—Blanket Club—Female Society.

Monies distributed in bread, the last Sunday in the month.
Ditto - - meat, at Christmas.

APPENDIX to REPORT on SILK WEAVERS of *Macclesfield.*

Appendix (H.)

A TABULAR VIEW of the Situation of the HAND-LOOM WEAVERS of *Macclesfield*, showing the Wages of Labour at various Periods, commencing in 1793.

Appendix to Silk Weavers, Macclesfield.

—	Bandannas, Per Cut.	Single Sarsnets.	Persians.	Gros de Naples, Per Yd.	Mountures, 240 Cords, Per Doz.	Figured Stage Harness, 100 Shaft. Per Doz.	Black Hand, 34 In. Per Doz.
	s. d.	*d.*	*d. d.*	*s. d.*	*s. d.*	*s. d.*	*s. d.*
1793 -	3 9½	—					
1811 -	4 11½	—					
1813 -	5 6½	10	7 & 8	- -	- -	- -	11 6
1815 -	3 6	—					
1821 -	3 6	9	5 & 6	1 1	30 -	14 -	10 -
1825 -	3 6	9	5 & 6	1 1	20 -	13 6	10 6
1829 -	2 6	5	3½ & 4	- 7	12 -	10 -	6 9
1832 -	2 3 & 2 6	4½	3½ & 3	- 6	8 6	7 6	6 9
1838 -	2 3 & 2 6	4	2½ & 3	- 5½	7 6	7 6	6 9

Appendix (I.)

A STATISTICAL VIEW of the Situation of the HAND-LOOM WEAVERS of *Macclesfield*, and that of other Trades in the Town; thereby showing their relative state as regards the Wages of Labour, from 1793 to 1838.

—	Number of Looms.	Average Wages of the Weavers per Week.	Price of Bandannas per Cut.	Persians, per Yard.	Bricklayers' Wages per Week.	Joiners' Wages per Week.	Labourers' Wages per Week.	Mill Men's Wages per Week.	Throwing Hands Stewards per Week.	Average Price of Corn.
		s. d.	*s. d.*	*d.*	£. *s. d.*	£. *s. d.*	*s. d.*	£. *s. d.*	£. *s. d.*	£. *s. d.*
1793 -	50	15 1½	3 9½	- -	- 18 -	- 18 -	10 -	- 8 -	- 9 -	2 8 11
1811 -	- -	17 6	4 11½ to 4 4½	- -	- -	- -	- -	- -	- -	4 14 6
1813 -	- -	19 10	5 6½ to 4 11½	7 & 8	- -	- -	- -	- -	- -	5 8 9
1815 -	1,000	- -	3 6	- - -	1 4 -	1 4 -	16 -	- -	- -	3 4 4
1821 -	- -	- -	3 6	5 & 6	1 4 -	1 4 -	- -	- -	- -	2 16 6
1825 -	5,325	19 7	3 6	5 & 6	1 4 5	1 4 -	18 -	- 18 - to 1 - -	- -	3 6 6
1829 -	3,000	10 4	2 6	3½ & 4	1 4 -	1 4 -	15 -	- -	- -	3 6 3
1832 -	3,500	9 -	2 3 & 2 6	3 & 3½	1 4 -	1 4 -	15 -	- -	- -	2 18 8
1838 -	4,500	7 - to 10 - clear earnings.	2 3 & 2 6	2½ & 3	1 2 -	1 4 -	14 - to 15 -	- 12 3	- 18 - to 1 - -	— —

Germany.

REPORT from S. Keyser, Esq., on *Prussia*, *Silesia*, *Saxony*, *Austria*, &c. &c.

To Nassau William Senior, Samuel Jones Loyd, William Edward Hickson, and John Leslie, Esquires, Her Majesty's Commissioners for Inquiry into the Condition of the Hand-loom Weavers.

Gentlemen,

Germany.

Report from *S. Keyser*, Esq.

Considering that the object of my Foreign Inquiry would be best attained by visiting the places inhabited by those most extensively engaged in the manufacture of articles, the cheaper production of which enables the foreign manufacturer to undersell the British in the American and other markets, I directed my attention to Prussia, Silesia, Saxony, Austria, &c. &c., proceeding by way of Hamburgh to Berlin, Potsdam, and the neighbourhood, where I commenced my investigation.

I find my opinion (formed when employed on a mission to Germany, soon after the establishment of the Prussian League) confirmed, as to the effects of that measure on British manufactures, namely, that in the *Prussian States* less injury has been occasioned to our export trade than was generally anticipated.

Although the high duty has caused a great falling off in the importation of British manufactured goods, that is, in some measure compensated by the increased consumption of the raw material and yarn imported from Great Britain. Should, however, the present system long remain in operation, we shall seriously suffer from its effects by the stimulus given to Prussian industry, and the encouragement afforded to those hitherto otherwise engaged in agricultural or commercial pursuits, to employ their capital in the establishment of factories, which, by the importation of British machinery, and by the influx of British engineers and machine-makers, are rapidly increasing and very extensively and advantageously carrying on their operations. Their works, although on a much more limited scale than similar undertakings now in this country, are still sufficient, in a great measure, to supply the wants of the surrounding population. Such establishments have, in fact, increased both in number and importance, so as very materially to affect our trade. The fairs at Leipzig and Frankfurth-on-the-Oder, in particular, are now almost deserted by British merchants and their agents, whilst the goods produced in the Prussian and Saxon States, at prices far below those at which our merchants can supply the German markets, meet a ready and extensive sale. The quality of German goods, perhaps, in many instances, is not equal to that of British; still, however, the price being, more particularly regarded by the consumer than the quality, the effect has been so to limit the demand for English goods, as to render the fairs no longer worth the attendance of persons dealing in British manufactures.

In many articles the continental manufacturer is also able successfully to compete with the English in the American and other foreign markets; and although the exact amount of their present exports cannot be correctly stated, they have, without doubt, of late considerably increased.

As to our future prospects in the continental trade, much will depend on the continuance or extension of the Prussian Customs' League. In some of the States, particularly in Saxony, I am inclined to think this measure is not quite so popular as it was some time ago; merchants and others seem rather disappointed in the results it has produced. The term of the present Treaty will expire in 1842, and some revision of the same will probably take place in 1840, when I have little doubt it will undergo considerable alterations, both as to its regulations and extent.

By means of cheap provisions, spare diet, and the very limited wants of the labourer and his family, wages are reduced so low, that articles equal, or not far inferior

Germany.

Report from *S. Keyser*, Esq.

inferior in quality to those manufactured in England, can be sent to the continental ports of shipment for America, &c. at prices under those of the British exporter. Of this low rate of wages, &c. some idea may be formed by the following statement:

In the neighbourhood of Berlin, working as hand-loom weavers, a man, his wife, two sons (lads) and a journeyman, live in a room 17 feet by 14, in which are two looms belonging to the man, cost 8*rd.* or 9*rd.* each, 24*s.* to 27*s.* sterling. The father and mother sleep in one small adjoining chamber, the two boys and the journeyman in another. They pay rent per annum 50*rd.*, or 7*l.* 10*s.* sterling; taxes per annum about 3*rd.*, or 10*s.* sterling. They must all work hard for the master to clear 3*rd.* or 9*s.* per week; the two boys wind. The journeyman, working 14 hours per day, gets 2*rd.* or 6*s.* per week, boards in the house, and pays the master 12*gr.* or 1*s.* 6*d.* per week. In the morning they have each a cup of bad coffee and a cake, such as is usually sold in Berlin for about a farthing; for dinner, groats, or meal porridge or potatoes, with, occasionally, a herring, or a little lard. In the evening, a slice of black bread and butter, to which they drink nothing but water; on Sunday they have sometimes a small quantity of bacon or other meat. There are at this moment many weavers out of employ seeking labour on the railroad and other works; they are, generally, of good moral character, having neither time nor means for dissipation or mixing with others of a different class.

Saxony.

At Nova Sass, near Potsdam, a village inhabited almost exclusively by weavers; they live very sparingly, although earning 2*rd.* or 1½*rd.* per week (4*s.* 6*d.* to 6*s.*)*

In Saxony almost every article of cotton manufacture is now produced, and new factories are daily being established in Chemnitz, Zwickau, Auderan, Freyburg, &c Great efforts are making to improve in the construction of machinery; a Joint Stock Company has established an engine and machine factory near Chemnitz, which, when visited in November last, was described to me as making rapid and successful progress;† I found there several English operative engineers. There are in Saxony other joint stock companies for the same purpose, one of some magnitude at Uebigau, near Dresden. Coal has, within a few years, been found in the neighbourhood of Dresden; the mines are becoming productive, and promise a plentiful supply.

Several railroads are projected, others in progress, and some are already in use.

The principal article in which the Saxons considerably undersell our merchants in the American and other foreign markets, is cotton hosiery, particularly the inferior descriptions. The manufacture of linen is also of the greatest importance to the foreign commerce of Saxony. In the mountainous districts, particularly Ober Lausitz, the Erz mountains (mining districts), Frauenstein, Freyberg, Augustenburg, Lauenstein, Wolkenstein and Krattendorff, flax is extensively cultivated, but still large supplies thereof are requisite from Russia, Brunswick and other places. The spinning of flax in Upper Lausitz, as well as in the district of Leipzig, employs numerous hands; notwithstanding which, 10,000 cwt. of linen yarn is annually imported from Silesia, Prussian Lausitz and Bohemia. The want of foreign linen yarns seems to increase, in consequence of the number of labourers in flax-spinning falling off in proportion as they are more advantageously employed in other trades, such as cotton manufacture, &c. A part of this deficiency will be supplied by machine spinning, of which some establishments are daily being formed. The peasant women and girls spin mostly for their own use.

Linen weaving, which in the whole country occupied 12,000 or 13,000 looms, is principally carried on in the mountainous districts of Saxony, on the borders

* Linen weaving occupies more looms than any other description of weaving; about one-eighth of the number belong to persons continually employed on them, who get their living entirely by weaving. The rest are the property of families who work at them as an occasional trade, in the intervals of field and other labour, working up in the summer the yarn which they have spun by hand during the winter, and on an average those looms are only going for about one month in the year; therefore producing only one-twelfth of what the regularly employed weaver would produce.

† I have since learnt that the directors are offering the whole establishment for sale, and there is some doubt whether the concern will be carried on.

borders of Bohemia, from Prussian Upper Lausitz to the banks of the Elbe; it is also pretty extensive in Freyburg, Lautenstein, Wolkenstein and Pfaffrode. In the district of Leipzig principally at Rochlitz, Colditz, and Leisnig. The number of looms is stated at about 950, weaving damask; 300 or 400, weaving ticking, &c.; 700 to 750, weaving white linens.

Another statement gives in Upper Lausitz alone, 4,000 linen looms; 5,000 coloured linen and cotton mixed.*

A weaver can generally produce by his loom 30 or 40 pieces, coloured linen, of 72 ells, in the course of a year; he requires from six to twelve days to work a piece.

For a piece of white linen the weaver's wages are from 1 *rd.* 8 *gr.* to 1 *rd.* 12 *gr.* or 1 *rd.* 16 *gr.*, (4 *s.* to 4 *s.* 6 *d.* sterling.) A loom at which two persons work would require 14 days' labour for a piece of 107 ells in length; consequently, the utmost amount of a man's wages per week would be 16 or 20 *gr.*, (2 *s.* to 2 *s.* 4 *d.*) sterling.

Supposing a weaver (with the assistance of a person to wind) to make about 20 pieces of white linen in a year, he would earn 30 *rd.*, (4 *l.* 10 *s.* sterling.)

Cotton printing works are on the increase, and much improved within the last three years. Very many new establishments in this branch have been formed; and although the Saxon prints in general are not equal to the best English in beauty of pattern, or brightness and fastness of colouring, they make up for these deficiencies by the cheaper prices at which they can be produced.

Daily improvement is also being made in pattern-drawing.

The bleaching of linen yarns was some years ago principally done in Bohemia, although there were several bleaching grounds in the mountains and in Upper Lausitz. The subsequent regulations of the Prussian League have since caused the establishment of several new bleaching factories.

Damask weaving is mostly carried on in Waltersdorff, Herrenwalde, Sahlendorff and Jahnsdorff, near Zittau, where, as long ago as 1835, more than 100 Jacquard looms were at work; 2,600 or 3,000 pieces are annually produced by 300 or 350 looms, each piece usually containing 60 ells in length, six-fourths wide; but they can also weave three-fourths, four-fourths, five-fourths, seven-fourths and even seven ells in width. The yarn is brought from the neighbourhood of Zittau, from Bohemia and from Prussia; the finest descriptions from Hennesdorff, near Lauban. The wages of the weavers who live scattered about the country are from 12 *gr.* to 1 *rd.* 4 *gr.* or 1 *s.* 6 *d.* to 3 *s.* 8 *d.* sterling per week.

The quantity of damask tabling made in Saxony occupies about 3,000 persons as weavers, loom-builders, pattern-drawers and other assistants.† The Jacquard loom is not yet generally adopted.

There were, a few years back, 900 or 1,000 looms at work. The weekly earnings of the weavers are as follows:—

4/4 to 5/4	- - -	18 *gr.* to 1 *rd.*	or 2 *s.* 3 *d.* to 3 *s.* – *d.* sterling.
6/4 ordinary	- -	1 *rd.* - - to 1 *rd.* 4 *gr.*	or 3 *s.* – *d.* to 3 *s.* 6 *d.* ,,
6/4 middling and fine		1 *rd.* - - to 1 *rd.* 16 *gr.*	or 3 *s.* – *d.* to 4 *s.* – *d.* ,,
7/4 to 10/4	- -	1 *rd.* 12 *gr.* to 2 *rd.* -	or 4 *s.* 6 *d.* to 6 *s.* – *d.* ,,
3 and 4 ells	- -	1 *rd.* 8 *gr.* to 2 *rd.* -	or 5 *s.* – *d.* to 6 *s.* – *d.* ,,
4 ½, 5 and 6 ells	-	1 *rd.* 12 *gr.* to 2 *rd.* 12 *gr.*	or 5 *s* 6 *d.* to 7 *s.* 6 *d.* ,,

The assistants earn about half the above wages.

Damasks

* I cannot vouch for the accuracy of these statements; it is, however, certain, that the number of looms has greatly increased since the Prussian Customs' League has been in operation. Many which had been unemployed, in consequence of the late stagnation of trade in America, are now again at work.

† There appear to have been, in the years 1836–37, in the whole kingdom of Saxony—
181 dealers in yarn, thread, twist, linen and table linen.
471 factories and other establishments for linen-weavers; and,
38 bleaching establishments.

Germany.

Report from *S. Keyser*, Esq.

Damasks manufactured from unbleached yarn, and also from unbleached cotton, form the chief article of the Zittau fabric; it is only in manufacturing the former article that any considerable progress has been made; the production of the latter is still imperfect, and can only be advantageously carried on by the extraordinary frugality and miserable mode of living to which the weavers are reduced by the very low rate of wages.

The exportation of Zittau fabrics is limited to linen *creas*; listados and a small quantity of damask to the American market. The manufacture of the former article is favoured by the very low price of *hand-spun* * linen yarn at Zittau and the neighbouring places. No linens are there manufactured for exportation, except the strong descriptions, containing 2,500 threads to the Saxon ell in width.

The English manufacturers greatly excel them in cotton weaving, both as to the cheapness and quality of the goods; and it is only by protection of the high duty on British and other foreign goods, that any trade in those articles can be maintained. The weaving is performed by hand-loom only. The large manufacturers give ont the yarn to the weavers, who weave it at their own looms, and return it, being paid by the piece; it therefore depends on himself when, and how much work he chooses to do. Most of them have one or two looms, at which their wives and family occasionally work. In addition to weaving, they all do more or less of field labour; so that it often happens, when there is plenty of the latter employment, a want of hands for weaving ensues.

It is to be observed, that the very low rate of wages is not only in proportion to the cheapness of provisions, but more particularly occasioned by the very limited wants of the working weavers; even the article of bread in that country, so very cheap, is still beyond the reach of these poor people, who subsist almost entirely on potatoes, which they cultivate on a small piece of land, either their own, or farmed at a very low rate.

In Silesia the oldest staple trade consisted in the manufacture of raw linens, which, when bleached, are called *platillas*, and were sent to the formerly French and Spanish colonies, namely, Louisiana and Mexico, also to Brazil. The yarn (hand-spun) was also woven by hand, in what is denominated 70 or 80 hanks, then bleached, made up, packed in paper, with gold rim and certain marks, and exported by way of Hamburgh or Bremen. This trade has, however, very much fallen off in latter years, say since 1805, and is now only carried on to a trifling extent; this description of linen goods having been entirely superseded in the above-named markets by English *mixed* cotton and linen goods, which can be produced much cheaper. Linens of bleached yarn have only been made in Silesia for about 30 years. They are now produced in larger quantities than ever, and partly from machine-spun yarn, which is of very good quality, and spun entirely from Silesian flax. This description of linen, called *creas*, finds a good market at Mazattan, New Orleans, Valparaiso, &c. They are grass bleached, and carefully packed.

Articles of mixed cotton and linen are rarely produced in Silesia, and none are made for exportation.

Cotton goods of all descriptions, usually manufactured in England, are also made in Silesia: the cotton yarn is all imported from Manchester. The annual consumption of twist amounts to nine millions of pounds English weight at the very lowest calculation.

The lower numbers of twist, as far as No. 10, are there spun by hand, and used in weaving fustians The wages of the linen weavers are very low, and particularly in the neighbouring Bohemian mountains (from whence much linen is sent to Silesia to be bleached and forwarded), their pay is less than in any other part of the continent. A linen weaver having, besides, some field labour,

* Far cheaper than English *machine-spun* yarn.

labour, for which he is paid, and generally a small plot of ground for his own use, is satisfied with the weekly average wages of 1 *s.* to 2*s.* sterling.*

None of the manufacturers have looms on their own premises.† The looms belong to the weavers, some of whom have three or four, and let them to women, who labour for their food, and an additional trifle in money per week; in this way a considerable quantity of linen is produced.

The case is somewhat different with cotton weavers, for, although they frequently do field labour, in addition to weaving, still most of them have two or three looms. At the approach of harvest, or other busy times for out-door work, the women, who all the rest of the year are employed at the loom, also go out to the fields; when that work is over, they return to their loom. The men are then employed in thrashing, and other agricultural labour, leaving their place at the loom to be filled by the journeymen and young women; the children wind, and a young girl prepares the warp, &c.

In this way the weaving of cotton generally proceeds. These people are much more healthy than those in other parts where they have no field labour, and where they sit continually at the loom. There is also an appearance of comfort with many of the cotton weavers; it is necessary, however, to observe, that the weavers of this description, *with scarcely an exception*, embezzle about five per cent. of the yarn. The weaver has to find the implements, and to prepare the materials for the loom, the work being seldom given out to them in a prepared state; this facilitates embezzlement, and renders its detection extremely difficult.

Although in their competition with the English in foreign markets the manufacturers and merchants of Germany are subjected to considerably greater expenses than the British, before their goods arrive at the port of shipment for America and other places beyond sea,‡ nevertheless, by the very low rate of

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* On inquiry in another quarter, I found that the wages generally earned by a hard-working weaver would be from 3½ to 7 *gr.* per day, according to the description of work on which he is employed, never exceeding 1 *rd.* (3 *s.*) sterling per week.

The wages paid to children in a spinning factory are from 2½ to 5 *ggr.* per day (3 *d.* to 6 *d.*), according to the quantity of work done; which is nearly equal to the earnings of a weaver. The overlooker in a factory has half a rix-dollar per day (9 *s.* per week).

The above observations on weaving, &c. will also apply to Bohemia and Saxony, with this difference, that both those countries have many cotton-spinning factories, whilst in Silesia there is as yet only one of any consequence. A cotton factory is now being built in Silesia, to work 3,000 spindles.

At present, Saxony and Bohemia spin about one-sixth of their yarn, five-sixths being still imported from England.

† The weavers better like working at home; the experiment has been made to employ them in factories, but they prefer being with their families.

‡ The cost of the yarn to make a piece of middling fine *creas* was in 1835 13 or 14 *rd.* The wages for weaving, bleaching, and expenses to Hamburgh, amount to 4 *rd.* 17 *gr.*; consequently about 33 per cent. On ordinary *creas* these charges will be almost doubled. The yarn must be purchased in the autumn; the winter is spent in weaving it, the spring with bleaching, and the goods would not arrive at Hamburgh before the month of June. The manufacture of such goods is in England completed in one quarter of the time, thus gaining a very great advantage. The Scotch weaver works 16 or 18 hours a day, earning about 2 *s.* 6 *d.* The weaver of *creas* in Germany gets about 1⅓ *rd.* to 2 *rd.* on an average, making about 5 *s.*, or one-third of the Scotch wages per week. The German weaver, however, takes sufficient time to attend to his domestic affairs, to cultivate his potatoes, &c., necessaries which the British weaver has to purchase. Embezzlement of yarn (which, from being constantly practised, is scarcely noticed by the manufacturer, and in hand-spun yarn is at any rate difficult to be detected) may be farther estimated as a gain to the weaver of 12 *ggr.*, or 1 *s.* 6 *d.* in a piece of *creas*. In England a better check is kept on the weaver, who is obliged to deliver a weight in linen corresponding with that of the machine-spun yarn given out to him. The linen yarn for a piece of *creas* cost in 1835—

In Saxony - -	15⅔ *rd.* or 47 *s.* sterling - -	formerly 44 *s.*
In Scotland - - - -	50 *s.* „ - - - -	58 *s.*

The expenses of weaving in Saxony and charges to Hamburgh amount to about 15 *s.*; the latter charges alone being 1⅔ *rd.*, or about 5 *s.*, whilst the cost of weaving in Scotland may be taken at 20 *s.* to 22 *s.* 6 *d.* as the highest, the transport and shipping charges very trifling; by which it appears, that a piece of *creas*, woven in Scotland from good machine-spun yarn, would cost about 10 *s.* more than the price at which such linen could be sent from the interior of Germany, and delivered in Hamburgh; and also, that the production of this article in Germany would require nearly a year's time, but would take scarcely three months in Great Britain.

This gain on time arises partly from the application of chemical bleaching, by which almost all goods shipped from England are prepared.

Germany.

Report from *S. Keyser*, Esq.

of wages paid, and perhaps by taking a smaller profit than would satisfy the English manufacturer, they have been able successfully to compete with him, in most instances, where any considerable shipments have been made. With cotton goods, in particular, the continental manufacturers have been striving hard to keep pace with the English, but in so doing have laboured under great difficulties, occasioned by the superior advantages of British machinery,* as well as the large quantity of goods introduced by smuggling from 1818 to 1830, to the great injury of their cotton factories. But these causes have given a greater impulse to German industry, and their factories during these years have gone on slowly, but regularly improving. Since that period the cotton manufactories in Silesia, as well as Saxony, have been daily gaining ground, owing to the more strict custom-house regulations of the German league.

In ordinary white goods, such as shirtings, the Silesians can undoubtedly undersell the English, notwithstanding the yarn is imported from England, by reason, as before stated, of the very low rate of linen-weavers' wages. On all other descriptions of linen this may not yet be the case, but there is no doubt it will as soon as more spinning factories are completed.

The Silesian weaver can certainly compete with the English power-loom, as long as the prices of provisions are so much lower than in England.

Generally speaking, Silesian industry is in its infancy, but it will undoubtedly, in the course of 10 or 15 years, very considerably advance, the country possessing those three principal requisites for cheap and productive labour, water-power, iron and cheap fuel. The labourers are a strong and industrious race of men, and the very great fertility of the country must ensure cheap provisions for many years to come.

Austria.

In the Austrian dominions, the export trade in manufactured goods is not of any considerable extent. There are few manufactories that can materially interfere with those of England.

Cotton spinning is carried on sufficiently to provide for their consumption, as well in Austria Proper, as in Austrian Italy, worked principally by machinery imported from England, or made from English models, and in many places by English workmen, who are much encouraged: considerable capital is thus employed. Goods could, however, be imported from England cheaper than they can be manufactured, were it not for the high duties. It is on the higher numbers of yarn only, that the duty is sufficiently low to admit of their introduction with advantage.

Some of the largest of the Austrian manufacturers are now beginning to erect power-looms for cotton weaving; they will undoubtedly in time be followed by the smaller manufacturers, and power-loom weaving be more generally adopted.

They have some beautiful fabrics of silk goods, and produce them in quantities sufficient for their home consumption. Some foreign silks, as well as cottons, are

* Speaking of the progress made by the English in machine-spinning, a German writer says,—

"Their articles, woven from machine-spun yarn, have, in many instances, injured our linen trade in the Transatlantic markets. This fact may, perhaps, be doubted; but those who are conversant with the subject will be of our opinion. The question now arises—By what means can we prevent this great loss to the north of Germany? In what manner are we to become less sensible of the great injury thus inflicted? The only reason why the goods produced in one country are preferred to those of another is, that they are either cheaper, or if at the same price, of better quality, which is in effect the same. The prices of articles are regulated by the cost of their production, and this depends chiefly on the price of the raw material and wages of labour. The English, who were formerly placed in a disadvantageous position, as compared with ourselves, have got over all their difficulties by the operations of machinery. They now produce linens at a price equally low with ours for a similar quality; and where the prices of English are higher, their goods produced by machinery are better, handsomer, and, what is of great consequence in trade, more correct and regular in the number of threads, an advantage which can never be attained with hand-spun yarn, by any legal regulations. Few articles of our linen goods will be thus affected by English competition; still, from the constant progress of industry, we must fear it will, in time, be the case with every description, only limited in some measure by the smaller supply of the raw material, for producing linen than of cotton, at the immediate disposal of the English manufacturer.

"But why shall we idly await this threatened blow to our commerce in linen, when in a position to resist the same, even with better success than has been the case in the cotton trade? Cheapness of raw material and low wages are advantages on the side of Germany. England has overcome these advantages by the use of machinery; let us then combat the English with their own weapons."

Germany.

Report from *S. Keyser*, Esq.

are introduced by contraband trade, but are worn exclusively by the higher classes.

There is throughout Austria a great want of English manufactured goods. Could some arrangement be made with the English Government, such as to cause a reduction in the duties now paid in Austria, very large quantities of British goods could be there disposed of, particularly hosiery, which is comparatively dearer than any other article of wearing apparel. Thread hosiery is more generally worn than cotton.

Many years must elapse before Austria can manufacture in sufficient quantities to export; being more an agricultural than a manufacturing country, few persons embark large sums in factories.

The only foreign markets to which Austria sends goods, are the Leipzig and Frankfurth fairs, and this trade is only in some articles of fancy goods. In shipping to foreign ports, very little business is done. Money wages are very low, provisions and living very cheap.

That Austria should ever join the Customs League, I consider very improbable; but, on the contrary, it would be more to their interest to admit our manufactures at a low duty, provided the productions of that country could be imported into England on equally advantageous terms.

What effect an alteration in the corn-laws might now produce, in limiting the further increase of factories in Germany, I do not feel competent to state; but I much fear that any reduction in the duties on corn, or even their total repeal, would *now* come too late, the manufacturers and merchants, as well as the Governments, feeling that they no longer depend on Great Britain for a supply of goods.

The following communication by a correspondent from Prague, will furnish some particulars respecting the condition of the weavers in that neighbourhood:

"Our weavers are in that state, that if each family had not a bit of land on which to grow potatoes for their food, and were they not to steal their fuel as they want it, from the forests with which the country abounds, they would almost starve on the wages they earn.

"A weaver working very hard, may get 1*f.* 42*kr.* to 1*f.* 48*kr.*, (about 3*s.* 7*d.* sterling,) in 10 or 12 days, as it will occupy that time to work a piece of cotton containing 115 ells by 1¼ Bohemian width. The weavers who make wider, or other descriptions of goods, earn about half as much again.

"The weaver generally embezzles about ¼ *lb.* out of 11¼ *lbs.* of the yarn given out to him, which he either immediately sells in that state, or lays by until sufficient to weave into a piece of cotton. With all this, and with *hard work*, he may obtain 4*s.* sterling per week.

"Wages during the last two years have at no time been higher than 2*f.* 12*kr.*, or 4*s.* 2*d.* sterling.

"These people are now in want of work and in great distress, occasioned by the large stock of goods in the hands of the manufacturers and cotton printers. They seldom eat bread, but only potatoes, which they cultivate themselves. But in this wretched state in which he manages to live, the *working weaver* is often better off than his *employer*, whose profits are reduced to a very low scale."

With exception of the embezzlement of yarn, for which the manufacturer no doubt makes allowance, and which is *almost* considered the *perquisite* of the weaver, these people are, generally speaking, well conducted. Their intelligence is by no means equal to what I have met with among those of the same class in England, nor are they as well capable of explaining their mode of work, the use of their implements, &c. The education of the children of the present age is (particularly in the Prussian States) well attended to, the laws obliging the parents to avail themselves of public instruction for their children. But these regulations, in many cases that have come under my own observation, are by no means submitted to, without considerable murmuring, as the parents think the time devoted to school might be more lucratively employed by their children in working at home.

Germany.

Report from *S. Keyser*, Esq.

Of the German manufacturers, many of whom are also *exporters*, I can only say generally, that they live much more frugally, indulge in fewer unnecessary expenses, and, as far as I could ascertain, are satisfied with smaller profits than their English competitors.

Annexed is a Table of the Duties levied in the Prussian Customs' Union, which it will be observed are payable on the net weight, and consequently fall most heavily on the coarser or ordinary descriptions, but are comparatively trifling in proportion to the value of the finer articles.

I have the honour to be,

Gentlemen,

Your most obedient servant,

S. Keyser.

Appendix (A).

Value of German Linens exported from *Bremen*—

	Rds.
In the years 1833 - - - - -	2,845,748
„ 1834 - - - - -	3,018,778
Of which, Silesian - - - -	1,107,343
„ Saxon - - - - -	379,429
„ Prussian Westphalia - -	468,241
„ Hessian, &c. - - - -	485,824
In the year 1836 - - - - -	3,305,883
Of which, Silesian - - - -	963,631
„ Saxon - - - - -	422,640
„ Prussian Westphalia - -	468,357
„ Hessian - - - -	375,182

The value of linens exported from Germany by way of Hamburgh in 1835 and 1836, will be about 3,500,000 *rds.*

APPENDIX (B.)

PRUSSIAN TARIFF.

THE following are the Articles on which the annexed DUTIES are to be taken.

[A florin is equal to about 2*s.* sterling, being about 2-3ds of a thaler.—A Prussian thaler is worth about 3*s.* sterling: a silver groschen, 1*d.*: a gute groschen, 1½*d.*—As the cwt. in Prussia is about 1 per cent. heavier than in some other countries within the League, there is a difference in the allowance for tare, or weight of package.]

No.	DENOMINATION of ARTICLES.	Rate of Duty according to the Prussian or Twenty-one Gulden standard, the Dollar divided in 30ths and 24ths. Measure and Weight,				Rate of Duty according to the Twenty-four Gulden standard and Customs' Cwt.			
		Weight, Measure or Number.	DUTY ON Import.	DUTY ON Export.	For Tare allowed from Gross Weight per Cwt.	Weight, Measure or Number.	DUTY ON Import.	DUTY ON Export.	For Tare allowed from Gross Weight per Cwt.
1	Waste—	*Cwt.*	*Thlr. Sgr. Ggr.*	*Thlr. Sgr. Ggr.*	*Lbs.*	*Cwt.*	*Fl. Kr.*	*Fl. Kr.*	*Lbs.*
	Of glass-houses, pieces of broken glass, lees of soap-houses, furriers' waste, animals' sinews, horns, horn-tips, hoofs and bones; the latter, whether whole or broken.	1	free	– 10 (8)*	- - -	1	free	– 31¼	
	Note.—On the Bavarian and Wurtemberg frontiers	–	- -	- -	- - -	1	free	1 40	
2	Cotton and Cotton Goods—								
	(*a*) Raw cotton - - - - - - - -	1	free	– 15 (12)	- - -	1	free	– 50	
	(*b*) Cotton Yarn—								
	1. White, untwisted, and wadding - - -	1	2 –	- -	- - 20 in casks or chests, 10 in bales -	1	3 26¼	- -	- - 18 in casks or chests, 9 in bales.
	2. Double or twisted yarn, twist and knitting yarn, also all dyed yarn - - - - - -	1	6 –	- -		–	- -	- -	
	(*c*) Cotton goods; also any goods manufactured of cotton and linen without mixture of silk or wool; also such stocking manufacture, laces (tull), lace-maker, buttonmaker, embroiderer and millinery; also spun and lace goods, consisting of metal wire (tinsel), and cotton or cotton and linen not mixed with silk; wool, iron, glass, wood, leather, brass, steel and other materials.	1	50 –	- -	- - 20 in casks and cases, 8 in bales.	1	85 –	- -	- - 18 in casks and cases, 8 in bales.
3	Lead—								
	(*a*) Raw, in blocks, pigs, &c. - - - - -	1	– 7½ (6)	- -	- - -	1	– 25		
	(*b*) Coarse leaden ware, as kettles, pipes, shot, plates, &c.	1	2 –	- -	- - 7 in casks and chests.	1	3 26¼	- -	- - 7 in casks and chests.
	(*c*) Fine leaden ware, as toys, partly or entirely of lead; also lacquered goods.	1	10 –	- -	- - 22 in casks and chests, 14 in baskets.	1	16 58¾	- -	- - 20 in casks and chests, 13 in baskets.
4	Brushmakers' and Sievemakers' Ware—								
	(*a*) Coarse, combined with wood and iron, without polish or varish.	1	3 –	- -	- - -	1	5 6¼		
	(*b*) Fine, combined with other materials - - -	1	10 –	- -	- - 22 in casks and chests.	1	16 58¾	- -	- - 20 in casks or chests.
5	Drugs and Apothecaries' Goods, also Dye Goods—								
	(*a*) Chemical manufactures for the use of medicine or trades; also preparations, ethereal and other oils, acids, salts, inspissated juices; also painting, washing colours, crayons, Indian ink, boxes of colours and ink, fine painting brushes, wafers, court-plaister, sealing wax, &c., and generally, all articles included in apothecary, drug and colouring goods, provided they are not particularly excepted.	1	3 20 (16)	- -	- - 10 in baskets, 7 in bales.	1	6 15	- -	- - 9 in baskets, 7 in bales.
	There are, however, the following exceptions, and to pay less; viz.								
	(*b*) Alum - - - - - - - - -	1	1 10 (8)	- -	12 in casks -	1	2 17½	- -	11 in casks.
	(*c*) White lead (kremserweiss), pure or adulterated -	1	2 –	- -	7 in casks -	1	3 26¼	- -	7 in casks.
	(*d*) Vermilion, smalt, purified soda (mineral alkali), vitriol of copper, mixed iron and copper vitriol, white vitriol.	1	1 –	- -	- - -	1	1 40		
	(*e*) Iron vitriol (green) - - - - - -	1	– 7½ (6)	- -	- - -	1	– 25		
	(*f*) Yellow, green, red colouring earth, red ochre, chalk, ochre, red stone, umbra; also red, also raw, in pieces.	1	– 5 (4)	– 5 (4)	- - -	1	– 18¾	– 18¾	
	(*g*) 1. Gall-nuts, madder, buckthorn berries, turmeric, quercitron, safflower, schumack, woad and weld.	1	– 5 (4)	– 5 (4)	- - -	1	– 18¾	– 18¾	
	2. Oak-apples and gall-nuts - - - -	1	– 2½	– 2½	- - -	1	– 8	– 8	
	(*h*) Dyewoods in blocks or rasped - - - -	1	– 5 (4)	– 5 (4)	- - -	1	– 18¾	– 18¾	
	(*i*) Corkwood, pockwood, cedar and boxwood - -	1	– 5 (4)	– 5 (4)	- - -	1	– 18¾	– 18¾	

* The figure in the upper line denotes silber groschen of 30 to the thaler. The figure in the lower line denotes gute groschen of 24 to the thaler. Thus 10 sgr are equal to 8 gute groschen, and 15 sgr. are equal to 12 gute groschen.

(*continued.*)

No.	DENOMINATION of ARTICLES.	Rate of Duty according to the Prussian or Twenty-one Gulden standard, the Dollar divided in 30ths and 24ths. Measure and Weight.				Rate of Duty according to the Twenty-four Gulden standard and Customs Cwt.			
		Weight, Measure or Number.	DUTY ON Import.	DUTY ON Export.	For Tare allowed from Gross Weight per Cwt.	Weight, Measure or Number.	DUTY ON Import.	DUTY ON Export.	For Tare allowed from Gross Weight per Cwt.
			Thlr. Sgr. Ggr.	*Thlr. Sgr. Ggr.*	*Lbs.*	*Cwt.*	*Fl. Kr.*	*Fl. Kr.*	*Lbs.*
5	Drugs and Apothecaries' Goods; also Dye Goods—*contd.*	*Cwt.*							
	(*k*) Pot, woadashes, tartrate of potass and unrefined soda.	1	– 7½ (6)	– –	– – –	1	– 25		
	(*l*) Mineral waters in bottles or cans – – –	1	– 7½ (6)	– –	– – –	1	– 25		
	(*m*) Saltpetre, refined or unrefined – – – –	1	– 5 (4)	– –	– – –	1	– 18¾		
	(*n*) Muriatic and sulphuric acid – – – –	1	1 10 (8)	– –	– – 25 in cases, 10 in baskets.	1	2 17½	– –	– – 23 in cases, 9 in baskets.
	(*o*) Refuse (waste) from the manufacture of saltpetre or muriatic acid.	1	– 7½ (6)	– –	– – –	1	– 25		
	(*p*) Brimstone – – – – – – – –	1	– 2½ (2)	– –	– – –	1	– 8		
	(*q*) Turpentine and oil of turpentine – – –	1	– 10 (8)	– –	– – –	1	– 31¼		
	Note.—Raw produce of mineral, vegetable and animal race for trade or medical purposes, which are not charged particularly higher or lower; also foreign cabinet-makers' wood, not otherwise enumerated; also lead, gold and silver, litharge are subject to the general duty inwards.								
6	Iron and Steel—								
	(*a*) Raw iron of all sorts; as iron from the mines, iron filings, hammered iron.	1	free	– 7½ (6)	– – –	1	free	– 25	
	Note 1.—In the western provinces of Prussia in Bavaria, Hessia, and in the grand duchy of Hesse, the export of raw iron is free.								
	2.—In Bavaria and Wurtemberg, imported on the right of the Rhine.	–	– –	– –	– – –	1	– 12½		
	(*b*) Wrought iron; as bar and rod iron, round, hoop, locksmiths', stretched, pinched, binding ingots, rough; bolt and barrel iron, also raw and cement steel; cast and refined steel.	1	1 –	– –	– – –	1	1 40		
	Note 1.—On the Bavarian and Wurtemberg frontiers, to the right of the Rhine.	–	– –	– –	– – –	1	2 48¾		
	2.—Of raw steel, by sea from the Russian frontiers to the mouth of the Vistula inclusive, the general import duty alone is charged.								
	(*c*) All sorts of iron in sheets, also iron wire, anchors, and anchor chains.	1	3 20 (16)	– –	– – 11 in casks and chests. 7 in baskets. 4 in bales.	1	6 15	– –	– – 10 in casks and chests. 7 in baskets. 4 in bales.
	(*d*) Iron Wares—								
	1. Coarse castings, stoves, plates, grates, &c.	1	1 –	– –	– – –	1	1 40		
	Note.—On the Bavarian and Wurtemberg frontiers, to the right of the Rhine.	–	– –	– –	– – –	1	2 48¾		
	2. Coarse articles made of wrought iron, iron and steel, plate iron, steel and iron-wire, also combined with wood; also such like goods tinned, but not polished; as axes, sword-blades, files, hammers, hatchets, pins, wood-screws, coffee-boxes and mills, chains, iron-machines, nails, pans, smoothing-irons, shovels, locks, coarse buckles, and rings not polished, vices, scythes, sickles, chisels, curry-combs, steeple-clocks, cloth-workers' and tailors' shears, coarse scale-beams, tongs, &c.	1	6 –	– –	– – 11 in casks and cases. 7 in baskets. 4 in bales.	1	10 12½	– –	– – 10 in casks and chests. 7 in baskets. 4 in bales.
	3. Fine; whether made entirely of fine cast-iron, fine polished iron or steel, or any such materials combined with wood, horn, bone, tanned leather, copper, brass, tin, (the latter polished), and other heavy metals; as fine cast-goods, knives, sewing and knitting needles, scissors, wool cards, sword cutlery, lacquered ironware, arms of all sorts.	1	10 –	– –	– – 22 in casks and chests. 14 in baskets.	1	16 58¾	– –	– – 20 in casks and chests. 13 in bakets.
7	Ores; namely, iron and steel ore, minerals, black-lead ore, black-lead calamina, cobalt.	1	free	– 5 (4)	– – –	1	free	– 18¾	
	Note.—In Westphalia and the Lower Rhine on the borders of Wilnsdorf to the Rhine, also on the Bavarian and Wurtemberg frontiers, iron ore.	1	free	free	– – –	1	free	free	
8	Flax, Tow, Hemp, Oakum – – – – – –	1	– 5 (4)	– –	– – –	1	– 18¾		

No.	DENOMINATION of ARTICLES.	Rate of Duty according to the Prussian or Twenty-one Gulden standard, the Dollar divided in 30ths and 24ths. Measure and Weight.				Rate of Duty according to the Twenty-four Gulden standard and Customs' Cwt.			
		Weight, Measure or Number.	DUTY ON Import.	DUTY ON Export.	For Tare allowed from Gross Weight per Cwt.	Weight, Measure or Number.	DUTY ON Import.	DUTY ON Export.	For Tare allowed from Gross Weight per Cwt.
			Thlr. Sgr. Ggr.	*Thlr. Sgr. Ggr.*	*Lbs.*		*Fl. Kr.*	*Fl. Kr.*	*Lbs.*
9	Grain, Pulse, Seeds and Berries—								
	(*a*) Grain and Pulse, as wheat, spelt or amel corn, barley, ditto malted, oats, heathcorn or buckwheat, rye, beans, pease, millet, lentils and vetches.	1 bushel	– 5 (4)	– –	– – – of Hessian measure.	1 malter	– 40		
		1 Bavarian bushel.	– 20 (16)	– –	– – –	1 Bavarian bushel	1 10		
	Note 1.—Beyond the Rhine district the import duty is taken according to the Supplement (A.); the export duty according to Supplement (B.)								
	Note 2.—On the Saxon and Bohemian frontiers the sorts of Grain comprised under the head (*a*), are admitted at the following reduced rates:—								
	Wheat, spelt or amel corn – – –	1 Dresden bushel.	– 1 5/6 (1 1/2)						
	Rye, beans, pease, millet, lentils and vetches.	ditto	– 1 1/4 (1)						
	Barley – – – – – – –	ditto	– 1 (3/4)						
	Oats and buckwheat – – – –	ditto	– 7/12 (1/2)						
	Note 3.—Oats in quantities under 2 1/2 simmer Grand Duchy of Hesse measure, or less than a Prussian bushel (scheffel), or in proportion under two Bavarian metzen (pecks); and other sorts of grain under 1 1/4 simmer Hessian measure, or under half a Prussian scheffel, or under one Bavarian metzen, free.								
	(*b*) Articles of seed and berries—	*Cwt.*				*Cwt.*			
	1. Aniseed and carawayseed – – – –	1	1 –	– –	– – –	1	1 40		
	2. Oil seeds: as hempseed, linseed, leindolter, poppy-seed, rape and turnip-seed.	1	– 1 1/4 (1)	– –	– – –	1	– 4		
	3. Clover-seed, and all kinds of seed not named in the tariff, also juniper-berries.	1 sch[l]	– 5 (4)	– –	– – –	1 malter Hessian.	– 40		
	Note.—The Grand Duchy of Hesse malter of clover-seed may be reckoned, including the bag, at 208 customs' lbs.; to the Prussian scheffel 95 Prussian or 89 customs' lbs., and to the Bavarian scheffel 360 customs' lbs.	1 Bavarian ditto.	– 20 (16)	– –	– – –	1 Bavarian scheffel.	– 10		
10	Glass and Glassware—								
	(*a*) Green concave glass, glass utensils – – –	*Cwt.* 1	1 –	– –	– – –	*Cwt.* 1	1 40		
	Note.—On the Bavarian frontier and the Wurtemberg, to the right of the Rhine.	– –	– –	– –	– – –	1	9 22 1/2		
	In loose packages the rates are— Per customs' cwt. 10 3/4 Hessian – – / 6 2/3 Old Bavarian – / 4 1/2 Rhenish-Bavarian cubic feet. Prussian cwt. – 5 1/2 Prussian – –								
	(*b*) White concave glass not ground, or with ground feet and rim; also window and plate glass without distinction of colour.	1	3 –	– –	– – 25 in casks and chests.	1	5 6 1/4	– –	– – 23 in casks and chests, 13 in baskets.
	Note.—On the Bavarian and Wurtemberg frontiers, to the right of the Rhine.	– –	– –	– –	– – –	1	9 22 1/2		
	(*c*) Ground, cut, gilt, painted; also all massive and cast glass ornaments for chandeliers, glass buttons, glass beads and enamel glass.	1	6 –	– –	– – 25 in casks or chests. 14 in baskets.	1	10 12 1/2	– –	– – 23 in casks or chests. 13 in baskets.
	Note.—On the Bavarian and Wurtemberg frontier, to the right of the Rhine.	– –	– –	– –	– – –	1	18 45		
	(*d*) Looking-glass—								
	1. The piece not measuring more than 315 □ inches Hessian measure, or 288 Prussian, or 333 old Bavarian, or 245 Rhenish-Bavarian square inches.								
	(*a*) Cast, covered or not covered—								
	(*aa*) The piece not measuring more than 158 □ inches Hessian, and not more than 144 □ inches Prussian.	1	6 –	– –	– – –	1	10 12 1/2	– –	
	(*bb*) The piece not measuring more than 158 □ inches to 315 □ inches Hessian, or 144 to 288 Prussian □ inches.	1	8 –	– –	18 in chests.	1	13 38 3/4	– –	16 in chests.
	(*β*) Blown, covered or not covered – –	1	3 –	– –	– – –	1	5 6 1/4	– –	
	Note to No. 1.—A distinction is made on the Bavarian and Wurtemberg frontiers; viz.								
	(*aa*) Covered – – – – – –	– –	– –	– –	– – –	1	18 45	– –	16 in baskets.
	(*bb*) Not covered – – – – – –	– –	– –	– –	– – –	1	13 38 3/4	– –	

(*continued.*)

No.	DENOMINATION of ARTICLES.	Rate of Duty according to the Prussian or Twenty-one Gulden standard, the Dollar divided in 30ths and 24ths. Measure and Weight.				Rate of Duty according to the Twenty-four Gulden Standard and Customs' Cwt.			
		Weight, Measure or Number.	DUTY ON Import.	DUTY ON Export.	For Tare allowed from Gross Weight per Cwt.	Weight, Measure or Number.	DUTY ON Import.	DUTY ON Export.	For Tare allowed from Gross Weight per Cwt.
10	Glass and Glassware—*continued.*	*Pieces.*	*Thlr. Sgr. Ggr.*	*Thlr. Sgr. Ggr.*	*Lbs.*	*Pieces.*	*Fl. Kr.*	*Fl. Kr.*	*Lbs.*
	2. Covered or not covered, cast or blown, the piece measuring—								
	Above 315 □ inches to □ 630 Hessian measure, or 288 □ inches to 576 □ inches Prussian, or 666 old Bavarian, or 490 Rhenish-Bavarian □ inches.	1	1 –	- -	- - -	1	1 45		
	Above 630 □ inches to 1,094 □ inches Hessian measure, or 576 to 1,000 Prussian, or up to 1,156 old Bavarians, or 888 □ Rhenish-Bavarian.	1	3 –	- -	- - -	1	5 15		
	Above 1,094 □ inches to 1,532 □ inches Hessian measure, or 1,000 to 1,400 □ inches Prussian, or up to 1,618 old Bavarian, or 1,242 Rhenish-Bavarian □ inches.	1	8 –	- -	- - -	1	14 –		
	Above 1,532 □ inches to 2,079 □ inches Hessian, or 1,400 to 1,900 Prussian, up to 2,196 old Bavarian, or 1,684 Rhenish-Bavarian □ inches.	1	22 –	- -	- - -	1	38 30		
	Above 2,079 □ inches, Hessian measure, or 1,900 Prussian.	1	33 –	- -	- - -	1	57 45		
	(*e*) Glassware, combined with base metals and other materials not connected with spinning; also all kinds of looking-glasses.	*Cwt.* 1	10 –	- -	- - 22 in casks or chests. 14 in baskets.	*Cwt.* 1	16 58¾	- -	- - 20 in casks and chests. 13 in baskets.
11	Hides, Skins and Hair—								
	(*a*) Raw (green, salted or dry), hides and skins for manufacture of leather, also raw horsehair.	1	free	1 20 (16)	- - 14 in casks or chests. 7 in bales.	1	free	2 48¾	- - 13 in casks and chests. 7 in bales.
	(*b*) Skins for manufacture of furriery, shamoy leather, Persian or Astrachan lambskin, Baranken and Ukraine.	1	– 20 (16)	- -	- - -	1	1 8¾		
	(*c*) Hareskins and hair - - - - - - -	1	free	– 15 (12)	- - -	1	free	– 50	
	(*d*) Oxen hair - - - - - - - - -	1	free	– 5 (4)	- - -	1	free.	– 18¾	
12	Wood and Woodenware, &c.—								
	(*a*) Firewood per water-carriage - - - - -	1 Prussian fath^{m}	– 2½ (2)	- -	- - -	1 Hessian sticken. 1 Bavarian fathom	– 4 – 8		
	(*b*) Wood for building and other purposes, to be transported by water or land for shipping stations.								
	1. Oak, elm, ash, herry-tree, pear, apple and cornel-tree.	1 ship's last of 4,000 lbs., or per float of 75 Prussian cubic feet.	1 10 (8)	- -	- - -	40 cwt.	2 30		
					or per float 156 Hessian cubic feet, or 66 Rhenish-Bavarian cubic feet.				
	2. Beech, pine, fir, larch, poplar, alder and other soft wood, also sawing goods, wood for casks (staves), hoops, poles, bavins, posts, osiers, &c.	1 ship's last, or p' float 90 cubic feet.	– 20 (16)	- -	- - -	40 cwt.	1 15		
					or per float of 190 Hessian cubic feet, or 80 Rhenish-Bavarian cubic feet.				
	Note 1.—In the eastern provinces of the Prussian states the duty is, on—	*Pieces.*							
	(*aa*) Masts - - - - - - -	1	1 10						
	(*bb*) Bowsprits or spars - - - - -	1	1 –						
	(*cc*) Blocks or beams of hard wood - -	6	1 –						
	(*dd*) Beams of pine or fir-wood - -	30	1 –						
	(*ee*) Planks, boards, laths, staves, hoops, poles, bavins, posts and osiers.	1 ship's last.	– 15						
	Note 2.—Beyond the limits of the Rhine in Bavaria and Wurtemberg, as well by water as land carriage; on the Danube, the Inn and Baden Lake, the export duty is taken as per Supplement (C.)								
	(*c*) Wood bark, or tan of oak or birch, also charcoal -	*Cwt.* 1	free	– 2½ (2)	- - -	*Cwt.* 1	free	– 8	
	(*d*) Wood ashes - - - - - - - - -	1	free	– 10 (8)	- - -	1	free	– 31¼	
	(*e*) Wooden domestic utensils, furniture and other carpenters', cabinet-makers and coopers' ware, which are coloured, stained, varnished, polished, or in separate parts, combined with iron, brass or tanned leather; also fine basketwork.	1	3 –	- -	- - 18 in casks and cases. 7 in bales.	1	5 6¼	- -	- - 16 in casks and cases. 7 in bales.
	(*f*) Fine wooden ware (inlaid work), Nuremberg ware, all sorts of fine turners', carvers' or comb-makers' goods, meerschaum ware, and such articles, combined with other materials, (with exception of gold, silver, platina, semilor precious stones and pearls, also wood bronzed), wooden clocks, very fine basketwork, and red and black pencils.	1	10 –	- -	- - 22 in casks and chests. 14 in baskets. 10 in bales.	1	16 58¾	- -	- - 20 in casks and cases. 13 in baskets. 9 in bales.
	(*g*) Stuffed furniture, same as coarse saddlery.								
	(*h*) Coarse coopers' ware, second hand, without iron hoops Note.—Coarse coopers', turners', basketmakers', carpenters', and all raw merely planed wooden goods, coachmakers' materials, and wooden machines, pay the general inward duties.	1	– 5 (4)	- -	- - -	1	– 18¾		

No.	DENOMINATION of ARTICLES.	Rate of Duty according to the Prussian or Twenty-one Gulden standard, the Dollar divided in 30ths and 24ths. Measure and Weight.				Rate of Duty according to the Twenty-four Gulden standard and Customs' Cwt.			
		Weight, Measure or Number.	DUTY ON Import.	DUTY ON Export.	For Tare allowed from Gross Weight per Cwt.	Weight, Measure or Number.	DUTY ON Import.	DUTY ON Export.	For Tare allowed from Gross Weight per Cwt.
		Pieces.	*Thlr. Sgr. Ggr.*	*Thlr. Sgr. Ggr.*	*Lbs.*	*Pieces.*	*Fl. Kr.*	*Fl. Kr.*	*Lbs.*
13	Hops	1	2 15 (12)	- -	- - -	1	4 16¼		
14	Instruments—Musical, mechanical, mathematical, optical, astronomical, surgical.	1	6 -	- -	- - 25 in casks and cases, 10 in bales.	1	10 12½	- -	- - 23 in casks and chests, 9 in bales.
15	Almanacks— (*a*) Those intended for home use are considered according to the regulations of the Stamp Duties. (*b*) Those that are sent out, pay the duty of half a dollar for the Prussian, or 50 kr. for the customs' cwt.; the exportation must be pointed out.								
16	Lime and gypsum, burnt	4 schеffel or 1 ton, or 1 Bavarian schäffel *Cwt.*	- 5 (4)	- -	- - -	1 malter, Hessian measure. 1 Bavarian schäffel. *Cwt.*	- 10 - 17½		
17	Teasels, or Weavers' Thistles	1	free	- 5 (4)	- - -	1	free	- 18¾	
18	Clothes—Ready-made, new, also second-hand clothes and linen; the two latter when introduced for sale.	1	110 -	- -	- - 22 in chests, 12 in baskets, 10 in bales.	1	187 5	- -	- - 20 in chests, 11 in baskets, 9 in bales.
19	Copper and Brass— (*a*) Raw pieces of brass, raw and black copper, refined and rose copper, old broken copper or brass, copper and brass filings, bell-metal, copper and other small coin for melting, are admitted according to the general inward duty (the coins by special permission.)	1	- 15 (12)	- -	- - -	1	- 50		
	(*b*) Wrought, rolled, cast, for utensils and copper bowls, as they come from the hammer; also tin, copper plates for roofs, common and plated wire; also polished, rolled and plated plates.	1	6 -	- -	- - 14 in casks and chests, 7 in baskets, 4 in bales.	1	10 12½	- -	- - 13 in casks and chests, 7 in baskets, 4 in bales.
	(*c*) Utensils. Kettles, pans and such like, and all other copper and brass wares; braziers' and bell-casters', girdlers' and pin-makers' wares, not combined with precious metals; also varnished, copper and brass ware.	1	10 -	- -		1	16 58¾	- -	
20	Cutlery, Hardware, &c.— Goods manufactured entirely or partly of gold, silver, platina, semilor or other fine mixed metals, plated with gold or silver, as bronze gilt in fire, mother-o'pearl, real pearl or corals and precious stones; also similar goods combined with alabaster, amber, ivory, whalebone, plaster of Paris, glass, wood, horn, bone, cork, lacquer, leather, marble, meerschaum, base metal, tortoiseshell, artificial stones, &c.; fine perfumery, as generally sold in the jewellery way, in small bottles, jars, &c.; etins, pocket watches, table and pendulum clocks, chandeliers, with gold and silver leaf or bronze; very fine varnished goods of metal or papier maché, umbrellas and parasols, fans, flowers, dressed feathers, perriwigmakers' work, &c., and generally all articles of hardware and cutlery not included in Nos. 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 10, 12, 14, 19, 21, 22, 27, 30, 31, 33, 35, 38, 40, 41 & 43 of the second division of this tariff; also goods of spun cotton, linen, silk or wool, which are combined with iron, glass, wood, leather, brass or steel, such as cloth or stuff caps, combined with leather buttons on wooden moulds, bell-ropes, &c.	1	55 -	- -	- - 22 in casks and chests, 14 in baskets, 10 in bales.	1	93 32½	- -	- - 20 in casks and chests, 13 in baskets, 9 in bales.
21	Leather, and Articles manufactured with it— (*a*) Tanned leather, or only red tanned hides; dressing hides, sole leather, calf leather, saddlers' leather, boot legs, Russia leather, chamois leather and tawed leather; also parchment.	1	6 -	- -	- - -	1	10 12½	- -	
	Note.—On the Bavarian and Wurtemberg frontiers, to the right of the Rhine.	- -	- -	- -	- - 18 in casks and cases, 14 in baskets, 7 in bales.	1	13 38¼	- -	- - 16 in casks and cases, 13 in baskets, 7 in bales.
	(*b*) Brussels and Danish glove leather: also Cordovan, Morocco, Spanish and all other dyed or varnished leather.	1	8 -	- -		1	13 38¾	- -	
	Note.—On the Bavarian and Wurtemberg frontiers, to the right of the Rhine. *Exception.*—Half-dressed goat and sheep skins for inland chamois and leather manufacturers are admitted under control at the general inward duty.	- -	- -	- -	- - -	1	18 45	- -	
	(*c*) Coarse shoemakers' and saddlers' ware, bellows and carriages in which leather and cushion work.	1	10 -	- -	- - 18 in casks and chests, 14 in baskets, 7 in bales.	1	16 58¾	- -	- - 16 in casks and cases, 13 in baskets, 7 in bales.
	Note.—On the Bavarian and Wurtemberg frontiers, to the right of the Rhine.	- -	- -	- -		1	18 45	- -	
	(*d*) Fine leather goods of Cordovan, Spanish leather, Morocco, Brussels and Danish leather, of shamoy and white dressed leather; also glazed leather and parchment; saddlery and harness, with buckles and rings, entirely or in part of precious metals or mixed metals; leathern gloves and fine shoes, of all sorts.	1	22 -	- -	- - 22 in casks and chests, 14 in baskets, 7 in bales.	1	37 30	- -	- - 20 in casks and chests, 13 in baskets, 7 in bales.

No.	DENOMINATION of ARTICLES.	Rate of Duty according to the Prussian or Twenty-one Gulden standard, the Dollar divided in 30ths and 24ths. Measure and Weight.				Rate of Duty according to the Twenty-four Gulden standard and Customs' Cwt.			
		Weight, Measure or Number.	DUTY ON Import.	DUTY ON Export.	For Tare allowed from Gross Weight per Cwt.	Weight, Measure or Number.	DUTY ON Import.	DUTY ON Export.	For Tare allowed from Gross Weight per Cwt.
		Cwt.	*Thlr. Sgr. Ggr.*	*Thlr. Sgr. Ggr.*	*Lbs.*	*Cwt.*	*Fl. Kr.*	*Fl. Kr.*	*Lbs.*
22	Linen-yarn, Linen and other Linen Goods—								
	(*a*) Raw yarn	1	– 5 (4)	– –	– – –	1	– 18¾		
	(*b*) Bleached and dyed yarn and thread	1	1 –	– –	– – –	1	1 40		
	(*c*) Grey packing linen and sailcloth	1	– 20 (16)	– –	– – –	1	1 8¾		
	Note.—In Bavaria and Wurtemberg as of raw linen (*d* and Note.)								
	(*d*) Raw (undressed) linen, drill and twilled	1	2 –	– –	– – 14 in chests, 7 in bales.	1	3 26½	– –	– – 13 in chests, 7 in bales.
	Note.—On the Bavarian and Wurtemburg frontiers, to the right of the Rhine	– –	– –	– –	– – –	1	9 22½	– –	
	Exception.—Raw unbleached linen may be introduced free:								
	(*aa*) In Prussia, on the frontier line from Leobschutz to Seidenberg, in Upper Lausitz, to the Silesian bleaching grounds or markets, also on the borders of the Province of Westphalia, to the bleaching grounds in the western provinces.								
	(*bb*) In Saxony, on the frontier line, from Ostritz to Schandan, also by permits.								
	(*cc*) By permits from the customs to the Electoral Hessian bleaching-grounds and markets.								
	(*d*) Bleached, dyed, printed or otherwise prepared linens, ticking (drillich), also raw and bleached table linen and towelling, linen frocks and new linen wearing apparel.	1	11 –	– –	– – 14 in chests, 10 in baskets, 7 in bales.	1	18 45	– –	– – 13 in chests, 9 in baskets, 7 in bales.
	(*e*) Ribbons, cambric, galloon, fringe, gauze, cambric lawn, wove lace, laces, hosiery and galloon; goods of wire and linen, but not combined with iron, glass, wood, leather, brass or steel.	1	22 –	– –	– – 20 in chests, 14 in baskets, 7 in bales.	1	37 30	– –	– – 18 in chests, 13 in baskets, 7 in bales.
	(*f*) Thread lace	1	55 –	– –	– – 25 in chests, 12 in bales.	1	93 32½	– –	– – 23 in chests, 11 in bales.
23	Candles, Tallow, Wax, Spermaceti and Stearine	1	4 –	– –	18 in chests	1	6 46¼	– –	16 in chests.
24	Rags and other Waste for Papermaking—								
	(*a*) Linen, cotton and woollen rags	1	free	2 –	– – –	1	free	3 26¼	
	(*b*) Old fishing nets, old rope and cordage	1	free	– 10 (8)	– – –	1	free	– 31¼	
25	Drugs, Grocery, Confectionery and other consumable Articles—								
	(*a*) Beer of all sorts in casks, also mead in casks	1	2 15 (12)	– –	– – –	1	4 16¼		
	(*b*) Brandy of all sorts; also arrack, rum, French brandy and mixed brandies.	1	8 –	– –	– – 22 in chests, 14 in baskets.	1	13 38¾	– –	– – 20 in chests, 13 in baskets.
	(*c*) Vinegar of all sorts, in casks	1	1 10 (8)	– –	– – –	1	2 17½		
	(*d*) Beer or vinegar in bottles or cans (inwards)	1	8 –	– –	– – 22 in chests,	–	13 38¾	– –	– – 20 in cases,
	(*e*) Oil in bottles or cans (inwards)	1	8 –	– –	14 in baskets	–	13 38¾	– –	13 in baskets.
	(*f*) Wine and must; also cider	1	8 –	– –	– – 22 in chests, 14 in baskets, 7 in casks, over-packed.	1	13 38¾	– –	– – 20 in chests, 13 in baskets, 7 in casks, over-packed.
	Note.—White Bodenlake wines introduced over the frontier from Lindau to Rottweil.	– –	– –	– –	– – –	1	1 40		
	(*g*) Butter	1	3 20 (16)	– –	18 in casks	1	6 15	– –	16 in casks.
	Note.—Single pieces coming in, weighing not more than 3 lbs. together, free.								
	(*h*) Meat, slaughtered, fresh, salt, smoked; also unmelted fat, hams, bacon, sausages and large game.	1	2 –	– –	– – 18 in casks and chests, 10 in baskets, 7 in bales.	1	3 26¼	– –	– – 16 in casks and chests, 9 in baskets, 7 in bales.
	(*i*) Fruit—								
	(*aa*) Southern fruits and leaves—								
	a Fresh oranges, lemons, citrons, Seville oranges and pomegranates. If the person paying duty wishes to have them counted out, he pays for 100 p^{r} {20 sgr. / 16 ggr.} or 1 fl 12 kr. Rotten ones pay no duty if thrown away in presence of the officers.	1	2 –	– –	– – 18 in casks or cases, 14 in baskets, 7 in bales.	1	3 26¼	– –	– – 16 in casks and chests, 13 in baskets, 7 in bales.
	β Dried fruits, as dates, figs, chesnuts, currants, almonds, peach-stones, raisins, bay berries and orange-peel.	1	4 –	– –	– – 18 in casks and chests, 14 in baskets, 7 in bales.	1	6 46¼	– –	– – 16 in casks and chests, 13 in baskets, 7 in bales.
	(*bb*) Fresh fruit and undried chicory-root, from the Bavarian and Wurtemburg frontiers to the right of the Rhine, are subject to the general duty inwards.								
	(*k*) Spices; viz. galangal, ginger, cardamoms, cubebs, nutmegs and mace, cloves, pepper, pimento, saffron, star aniseed, vanilla, cinnamon and cassia and cassia buds.	1	6 20 (16)	– –	– – 18 in casks and chests, 14 in baskets, 7 in bales.	1	11 21¼	– –	– – 16 in casks and chests, 13 in baskets, 7 in bales.
	(*l*) Herrings	1 bar. cwt.	1 –	– –	– – –	p' bar. cwt. 1	1 45		
	(*m*) Coffee and succedaneum for coffee	1	6 20 (16)	– –	– – 14 in casks, chests and baskets, 7 in bales.	1	11 21¼	– –	– – 13 in casks, chests and baskets, 7 in bales.
	(*n*) Cocoa	1	6 20 (16)	– –		1	11 21¼	– –	
	(*o*) Cheese of all kinds	1	3 20 (16)	– –	– – 8 in casks and chests, 10 in baskets, 7 in bales.	1	6 15	– –	– – 16 in casks and chests, 9 in baskets, 7 in bales.

No.	DENOMINATION of ARTICLES.	Rate of Duty according to the Prussian or Twenty-one Gulden standard, the Dollar divided in 30ths and 24ths. Measure and Weight.				Rate of Duty according to the Twenty-four Gulden Standard and Customs' Cwt.				
		Weight, Measure or Number.	DUTY ON Import.	DUTY ON Export.	For Tare allowed from Gross Weight per Cwt.	Weight, Measure or Number.	DUTY ON Import.	DUTY ON Export.	For Tare allowed from Gross Weight per Cwt.	
			Thlr. Sgr. Ggr.	*Thlr. Sgr. Ggr.*	*Lbs.*	*Cwt.*	*Fl. Kr.*	*Fl. Kr.*	*Lbs.*	
25	Drugs, Grocery, Confectionery, &c.—*continued.*	*Cwt.*								
	(*p*) Confectionery, sweetmeats, cakes of all sorts, preserved fruits and spices with sugar and vinegar; also chocolate, caviar, olives, pasties, sago and succedaneum for sago, prepared mustard, and portable soup.	1	11 –	– –	– – 22 in casks and chests, 14 in baskets, 7 in bales.	1	18 45	– –	– – 20 in casks and chests, 13 in baskets, 7 in bales.
	(*q*) Starch, also vermicelli, hair-powder and articles of starch.	1	2 –	– –	– – 14 in casks or chests, 7 in bales.	1	3 26¼	– –	– – 13 in casks or chests, 7 in bales.
	(*r*) Ground manufactures from grain or husks; viz. bruised or peeled grains, barley groats, grit groats, flour.	1	2 –	– –		1	3 26¼	– –		
	Note.—Common rye bread, coming from the Saxon boundary towards Bohemia by land.	1	– 5 (4)							
	(*s*) Shellfish from the sea; as oysters, lobsters, muscles, turtle, &c.	1	4 –	– –	– – –	1	6 46¼			
	(*t*) Rice	1	3 –	– –	– – 4 in casks, 7 in bales.	1	5 6¼	– –	– – 13 in casks, 7 in bales.	
	(*u*) Salt (common salt, rock salt) is prohibited; when allowed to be carried through, the duty is specially fixed.									
	(*v*) Treacle	1	5 –	– –	14 in casks	1	8 32½	– –	13 in casks.	
	(*w*) Tobacco—									
	1. Leaf tobacco (unmanufactured and stalks)	1	5 15 (12)	– –	– – 15 in casks, 10 in baskets, 7 in bales.	1	9 22½	– –	– – 14 in casks, 9 in baskets, 7 in bales.	
	2. Manufactured tobacco, as for smoking, in rolls, rolled or cut leaf cigars, snuff in carrots or bars and grated, also tobacco dust.	1	11 –	– –	– – 18 in casks, 14 in baskets, 7 in bales.	1	18 45	– –	– – 16 in casks, 13 in baskets, 7 in bales.	
	(*x*) Tea	1	11 –	– –	25 in chests.	1	18 45	– –	23 in chests.	
	(*y*) Sugar—									
	1. Refined and cooking sugar	1	11 –	– –	– – 18 in oak casks, 15 in other casks.	1	18 45	– –	– – 16 in oaken casks, 14 in other casks.	
	2. Raw sugar and lumps for melting, for the inland refiners, under the particular conditions and regulations.	1	5 –	– –	– – 15 in casks and chests, 10 in baskets, 7 in bales, 20 in chests of 8 cwt. and upwards.	1	8 32½	– –	– – 14 in casks or chests, 9 in baskets, 7 in bales, 18 in chests of 8 cwt. and upwards.	
26	Oil in Casks, inwards	1	1 20 (16)	– –	– – –	1	2 48¾			
	Olive oil, for the use of manufactures, is admitted at the general duty, if there is added at the customs' stations on the frontier, or when taking it out of the warehouses, 1 lb. of oil of turpentine to 1 cwt. of oil.									
	Note.—On the Bavarian and Wurtemberg frontiers to the right of the Rhine—									
	(*a*) Linseed, hemp, turnip, and rape oil	–	– – –	– –	– – –	1	4 16½			
	(*b*) Olive, poppy, nut, and beech oil	–	– – –	– –	– – –	1	8 32½			
27	Paper and Pasteboardware—									
	(*a*) Unsized ordinary printing paper, also coarse white or coloured packing paper, or pasteboard.	1	1 –	– –	– – –	1	1 40			
	(*b*) All other sorts of paper	1	5 –	– –	– – 14 in chests, 7 in bales.	1	8 32½	– –	– – 13 in chests, 7 in bales.	
	Note.—Paper which is printed, lithographed, or ruled, in order to be used in that state for accounts, posting bills, freight notes, &c., are included in the descriptions of paper marked (*b*).									
	(*c*) Paperhangings	1	10 –	– –	– – 18 in casks, 14 in chests, 10 in bales.	1	16 58¾	– –	– – 16 in chests, 13 in baskets, 9 in bales.	
	(*d*) Bookbinders' work in paper and pasteboard, also coarse lacquered goods of these materials.	1	10 –	– –	– – 18 in casks, 14 in chests, 7 in bales.	1	16 58¾	– –	– – 16 in chests, 13 in baskets, 7 in bales.	
28	Furs; (finished furriers' work, as lined cloaks, caps, gloves, coverlids, fur lining, trimmings, &c.) *Exception.*—Finished unlined sheepskin cloaks.	1	22 –	– –	– – 22 in chests, 7 in bales.	1	37 30	– –	– – 20 in chests, 7 in bales.	
29	Gunpowder	1	2 –	– –	14 in casks	1	3 26¼	– –	13 in casks.	
30	Silk and Silkenwares—									
	(*a*) Dyed or bleached silk or ferret, thrown or not thrown; also thread of raw silk.	1	6 –	– –	– – 18 in chests, 10 in bales.	1	10 12½	– –	– – 16 in chests, 9 in bales.	
	(*b*) Silk stuffs and stocking goods, handkerchiefs (shawls), ribbons, blond lace, laces, petinet, gauze, trimming-makers', button-makers', embroiderers' and haberdashers' goods, spun and fringe work of wire and silk, not combined with iron, glass, wood, leather, brass, or steel, gold or silver articles; and, lastly, such goods made of floret silk (bourre de soie) or silk and floret silk.	1	110 –	– –	– – 25 in chests, 14 in bales.	1	187 5	– –	– – 23 in chests, 13 in bales.	

(*continued.*)

No.	DENOMINATION of ARTICLES.	Rate of Duty according to the Prussian or Twenty-one Gulden standard, the Dollar divided in 30ths and 24ths. Measure and Weight.				Rate of Duty according to the Twenty-four Gulden standard and Customs' Cwt.			
		Weight, Measure or Number.	DUTY ON Import.	DUTY ON Export.	For Tare allowed from Gross Weight per Cwt.	Weight, Measure or Number.	DUTY ON Import.	DUTY ON Export.	For Tare allowed from Gross Weight per Cwt.
		Cwt.	*Thlr. Sgr. Ggr.*	*Thlr. Sgr. Ggr.*	*Lbs.*	*Cwt.*	*Fl. Kr.*	*Fl. Kr.*	*Lbs.*
30	Silk and Silkenwares—*continued.*								
	(*c*) All the above articles in which besides silk and floret silk, there are also other spun materials with which wool or other animal hair, cotton, or linen are used separately or mixed.	1	55 –	– –	– – 22 in chests, 12 in bales.	1	93 $32\frac{1}{2}$	– –	– – 20 in chests 11 in bales.
31	Soap—								
	(*a*) Green and black	1	1 –	– –	– – –	1	1 40		
	(*b*) Common white	1	3 20 (16)	– –	– – 14 in cases, 7 in bales.	1	6 15	– –	– – 13 in cases, 7 in bales.
	(*c*) Fine, in cakes and balls	1	10 –	– –	18 in cases	1	16 $58\frac{3}{4}$	– –	16 in cases.
32	Playing cards, of all shape and size, are prohibited for inland use; if such are declared as passing through, the transit duty is payable by a half dollar per Prussian, or 50 kr. per customs' cwt.								
	Introduced to Bavaria, Wurtemberg, and the Grand Duchy of Hesse, complying with the stamp regulations.	1	10 –	– –	– – –	1	16 $58\frac{3}{4}$		
	In Saxony playing cards introduced for inland use are considered according to the regulations for payment of stamp duties.								
33	Stone—								
	(*a*) Broken and hewn stones of all kinds, millstones, coarse grinding and sharpening stones, tofus, tarras, brick and baked stones of all kinds transported by water, also by land if the stones are intended for a depôt for shipping.	1 ship's last.	– 15 (12)	– –	– – –	40	– 56		
	(*b*) Articles in alabaster, marble or soap stone, also artificial stones mixed with base metal, also real and artificial polished stones, pearls and corals not set.	*Cwt.* 1	10 –	– –	– – 14 in casks and chests.	1	16 $58\frac{3}{4}$	– –	– – 13 in casks and chests.
	Note to (*a*) and (*b*)—								
	1. Large marble work, such as statues, busts, &c., also flint stones, fine polishing and sharpening stones, also goods made of serpentine stone, pay the usual import duty.								
	2. Broken and hewn stone, introduced per Bodensee, free.								
	3. On the Bavarian and Wurtemberg frontiers, to the right of the Rhine, millstones and large sharpening stones.	–	– – –	– –	– – – –	*Piece.* 1	– 30		
	4. Lithographic stones	*Piece.* 1	– $1\frac{1}{4}$ (1)	– –	– – –	–	– –	– 4	
34	Coals	*Cwt.* 1	– $1\frac{1}{4}$	– –	– – –	*Cwt.* 1	– 4		
35	Straw, Cane and Bastware—								
	(*a*) Mats and Floor-cloths of bast straw or rushes	1	– 5 (4)	– –	– – –	1	– $18\frac{3}{4}$		
	(*b*) Straw and bast twisted coarse straw hats, and covers of unsplit straw, chip and cane hats, without trimming.	1	10 –	– –	– – 22 in chests 10 in bales.	1	16 $58\frac{3}{4}$	– –	– – 20 in chests, 9 in bales.
	(*c*) Fine bast and straw hats	1	55 –	– –	– – –	1	93 $32\frac{1}{2}$		
36	Tallow (melted animal fat)	1	3 –	– –	– – 14 in casks and chests.	1	5 $6\frac{1}{4}$	– –	– – 13 in casks and chests.
37	Tar, Birch Oil, Common Pitch	1	– 5 (4)	– –	– – –	1	– $18\frac{3}{4}$		
38	Potters' Clay and Potteryware—								
	(*a*) Potters' clay for porcelain manufactory (porcelain clay.)	1	– free –	– 5 (12)	– – –	1	– free –	– 50	
	(*b*) Common potters'-ware, flag-stones, crucibles	1	– 10 (8)	– –	– – –	1	– $31\frac{1}{4}$		
	(*c*) Single-coloured or white delftware or stoneware, earthen pipes.	1	5 –	– –	– – –	1	8 $32\frac{1}{2}$	– –	
	(*d*) Painted, printed, gilt or silvered delft or stoneware	1	10 –	– –	18 in chests, 10 in baskets	1	16 $58\frac{3}{4}$	– –	16 in chests, 9 in baskets.
	(*e*) White porcelain	1	10 –	– –	– – –	1	16 $58\frac{3}{4}$	– –	
	(*f*) Porcelain coloured, and white with coloured stripes, or the same with painting and gilding.	1	25 –	– –	– – 25 in cases, 14 in baskets.	1	42 30	– –	– – 23 in cases, 13 in baskets.
	(*g*) Delft, stoneware and other earthern vessels; also white porcelain with enamel, or combined with base or precious metals.	1	10 –	– –	18 in chests,	1	16 $58\frac{3}{4}$	– –	16 in chests,
	(*h*) The same combined with gold, silver, platina, semilor, and other fine mixed metals; also all other porcelain combined with precious or base metals.	1	55 –	– –	10 in baskets.	1	93 $32\frac{1}{2}$	– –	9 in baskets.

No.	DENOMINATION of ARTICLES.	Rate of Duty according to the Prussian or Twenty-one Gulden standard, the Dollar divided in 30ths and 24ths. Measure and Weight.				Rate of Duty according to the Twenty-four Gulden standard, and Customs' Cwt.			
		Weight, Measure or Number.	DUTY ON Import.	DUTY ON Export.	For Tare allowed from Gross Weight. per Cwt.	Weight, Measure or Number.	DUTY ON Import.	DUTY ON Export.	For Tare allowed from Gross Weight. per Cwt.
39	Cattle—		*Thlr. Sgr. Ggr.*	*Thlr. Sgr. Ggr.*	*Lbs.*		*Fl. Kr.*	*Fl. Kr.*	*Lbs.*
	(*a*) Horses, mules, asses	each	1 10 (8)	- -	- - -	each	2 20		
	(*b*) Oxen and bulls	each	5 -	- -	- - -	each	8 45		
	Note.—Horses and the other above-named animals are free of duty when the use made of them when introduced is proved to be as beasts of draught or burthen to the team of a travelling carriage or waggon, or to carry goods, or the horses of travellers which are rode on the journey; colts following the mother are admitted free.								
	(*c*) Cows	each	3 -	- -	- - -	each	5 15		
	(*d*) Heifers (young cattle)	each	2 -	- -	- - -	each	3 30		
	(*e*) Pigs, with the exception of sucking pigs—								
	1. Fattened	each	1 -	- -	- - -	each	1 45		
	2. Lean	each	- 20 (16)	- -	- - -	each	1 10		
	(*f*) Sheep (wether mutton)	each	- 15 (12)	- -	- - -	each	- 52½		
	(*g*) Other sheep, cattle, goats, calves, and sucking-pigs.	each	- ⅝	- -	- - -	each	- 17½		
	Note.—On the frontier lines, from Waldmünchen to Marienhulf, near Passau; and from Schellenburg near Salzburg, along the Alps to the Bodensee, oxen, bulls, cows, and young cattle, are admitted at reduced duties, which are to be settled.								
40	Waxed Linen (oilcloth), Waxed Muslin, Oiled Silk, and Waxedware—	*Cwt.*				*Cwt.*			
	(*a*) Coarse black unprinted wax cloth	1	2 -	- -	14 in chests, 10 in baakets, 7 in bales.	1	3 26¼	- -	13 in cases, 9 in baskets, 7 in bales.
	(*b*) All other sorts; also waxed muslin and waxed silk.	1	5 15 (12)	- -		1	9 22½	- -	
	(*c*) Fine embossed waxware	1	10 -	- -	22 in cases -	1	16 58¾	- -	20 in cases.
41	Wool and Woollenware—								
	(*a*) Raw sheep's wool	1	free	- 2	- - -	1	free	3 26¼	
	(*b*) White treble or more twisted woollen or mohair yarn, also all dyed yarn.	1	6 -	- -	- - 18 in casks and chests. 10 in bales.	1	10 12½	- -	- - 16 in casks and chests, 9 in bales.
	(*c*) Woollen stuff and stockingware shawls, cloth and feltware, trimming-maker, button-maker, embroiderer and haberdasherware, not combined with iron, glass, wood, leather, brass or steel; also the like goods made of animal hair, or that mixed with wool; and lastly, goods of the above sort mixed with other, not silken spunware.	1	30 -	- -	22 in chests -	1	51 2½	- -	20 in chests.
	(*d*) Tapestry of wool or other animal hair, or the same mixed with linen.	1	20	- -	10 in bales -	- -	34 3¾	- -	9 in bales.
	Note.—Oilcloth of horse-hair pays the general duty inwards.								
42	Zinc—								
	(*a*) Raw	1	2 -	- -	- - 11 in casks and chests.	1	3 26¼	- -	10 in casks and chests, 7 in baskets.
	(*b*) In plates	1	3 20 (16)	- -	7 in baskets -	1	6 15	- -	
43	Tin and Tinware—								
	(*a*) Coarse tinware; as dishes, plates, spoons, kettles, and other vessels, pipes and plates.	1	2 -	- -	- - 11 in casks and chests, 7 in baskets.	1	3 26¼	- -	- - 10 in casks and chests, 7 in baskets.
	(*b*) Other fine and lacquered tin goods, toys, and the like.	1	10 -	- -	- - 22 in casks and chests, 14 in baskets.	1	16 58¾	- -	- - 20 in casks and chests. 13 in baskets.
	Note.—Tin in blocks and old tin pay the general duty inwards.								

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RETURN to an Address of the Honourable The House of Commons, dated 15 February 1839;—*for*,

COPIES of certain REPORTS of the ASSISTANT HAND-LOOM WEAVERS' COMMISSIONERS.

REPORTS

FROM

Assistant Hand-Loom Weavers' Commissioners.

REPORT, by H. S. CHAPMAN, Esq., on the West Riding of *Yorkshire*.

REPORT, by C. G. OTWAY, Esq., on *Ireland*.

REPORTS, by RICHARD M. MUGGERIDGE, Esq., on the Linen and Cotton Manufactures of *Ireland*.

PART III.

Ordered, by The House of Commons, *to be Printed*,
4 *February* 1840.

Hand-loom Inquiry Commission,
3, Trafalgar-square, Westminster,
July 12, 1839.

Sir,

IN obedience to Lord John Russell's desire, signified to this Board by your Letter of the 20th of February last, that they should give directions to have copies of any Reports of Assistant Commissioners of the Hand-loom Inquiry prepared and transmitted to you, I am requested to forward the accompanying copies of the Reports of Mr. Chapman, Mr. Otway, and Mr. Muggeridge, in addition to those sent on the 28th of May last.

They contain the results of the investigations into the condition of the Woollen and Worsted Weavers of the West Riding of Yorkshire, and of the Weavers in Ireland, upon whatever material employed. The rest of the Assistant Commissioners' Reports are nearly completed, and will be transmitted to you so soon as they are received.

I have the honour to be,
Sir,
Your most obedient Servant,

Joseph Fletcher,
Secretary.

To the Honourable Fox Maule, M. P.
&c. &c.

REPORT, from H. S. Chapman, Esq., on—

Yorkshire (West Riding) - - - - - - - - - - p. 527

REPORT, from C. G. Otway, Esq., on—

Ireland - - - - - - - - - - - - - - p. 591

REPORTS, from Richard M. Muggeridge, Esq., on—

The Linen and Cotton Manufactures of Ireland - - - - - p. 677

Yorkshire (West Riding.)

REPORT from H. S. Chapman, Esq.

To Nassau William Senior, Samuel Jones Loyd, William Edward Hickson, and John Leslie, Esquires, Her Majesty's Commissioners for inquiring into the Condition of the Hand-loom Weavers in the United Kingdom.

Gentlemen,

Yorkshire (West Riding.)

Report from *H.S. Chapman*, Esq.

In compliance with your instructions, I proceeded, in the month of July last, to the West Riding of Yorkshire, to inquire into the condition of the hand-loom weavers of that district; and I now submit a Report of my investigations, as far as I have been permitted to proceed with them.

The district assigned to me is the principal seat of the woollen and worsted manufacture in the North of England: the cotton manufacture has also, to a moderate extent pushed its way into the north-western portion of the Riding, whilst the linen manufacture has established itself in Barnsley, and the villages around.

It was to the former branches of manufacturing industry that I was instructed to confine my inquiries, "the linen manufacture being subjected to a contemporaneous investigation by Mr. Keyser."*

The West Riding of Yorkshire may be considered as exhibiting an epitome, so to speak, of the manufacturing industry of Great Britain; wool, cotton, flax and silk being severally worked up, in some form or other, in that district. In point of extent, however, all yield to the first-named material, in its two great divisions, of "woollen" and "worsted" manufacture,—a distinction which will be presently explained.

The centre, or, more properly speaking, the focus, of the woollen manufacture is Leeds, where there are two extensive market places, called "Cloth-halls," at one or other of which, the manufacturers of the several clothing villages attend. The great mart of the worsted or stuff trade is Bradford, where there is a similar market place, called the "Piece-hall," which is similarly attended. In like manner, Halifax has its "Piece-hall," where worsted and woollen fabrics both find a market; Huddersfield its "Cloth-hall" celebrated more for "fancy goods," subject to perpetual changes of fashion, than for broad-cloths, and Dewsbury its "Blanket-hall;" whilst the flannels which are manufactured partly in the district of Saddleworth, and partly in Lancashire, have their market at Rochdale.†

The difference between "woollen" and "worsted" manufactures, arises out of a peculiar property of wool, called the felting property, of which advantage is taken in the manufacture of woollens, but which is neglected‡ in the case of stuffs or worsteds. In the process of milling, or fulling, the fibres of the wool seem to be mechanically united together, so that the cloth, instead of remaining reticulated as it comes from the loom, is rendered almost homogeneous, and capable of bearing the smooth surface or nap which is raised upon it. In the case of worsted fabrics, in place of the felting process, the wool is submitted to that of combing, by which the fibres are lengthened out, and laid even.

In all the processes preliminary to the spinning of the yarn for the manufacture of woollen cloth, the facilitating of the felting process seems to be kept in view, whilst in the preparatory stages of worsted spinning, that property is disregarded, and the evenness and closeness of the spinning alone considered. A very brief description of the two processes is necessary, to render much of the evidence on the

* The Secretary's Letter of Instructions.

† The above divisions will be rendered perfectly clear by the map delivered in with my Report, which, in accordance with the instructions of the Board, is marked into districts around the several markets named above. The clothing district around Leeds is coloured *blue*; the locality of the blanket manufacture around Dewsbury is made somewhat *darker*, and the "fancy" districts around Huddersfield, and the flannel districts around Rochdale, somewhat *lighter*. The worsted district around Bradford is coloured *green*, that around Halifax being *lighter*. The locality of the linen manufacture is coloured *brown*, that of the cotton manufacture *yellow*.

‡ The felting property of wool is not destroyed by combing, as stated by Mr. M'Culloch in his Dictionary of Commerce (article, Wool), as the refuse wool, as it comes from the comber, is under the name of *noils*, sold to the cloth-makers, and by them worked up.

Yorkshire (West Riding.)

Report from *H. S. Chapman*, Esq.

the condition of the woollen and worsted weavers intelligible, and first of the preparation of the wool and spinning of the yarn for the manufacture of woollen cloth.

For the purpose of cloth-making, the "shortness of the staple" of the wool is no objection, so that the quality be fine, and the felting property be in perfection; whilst for the purpose of being spun into worsted, the length of the staple must be considered. Generally speaking, the finest wools are of short staple, so that the worsted spinner has often difficulty in obtaining fine wools suited to his purpose. In the case of the coarser wools there is no such difficulty, for they are usually of longer staple. Wools which unite a high degree of fineness with a considerable, or even tolerable length of staple, bear the highest price.

All the processes to which the wool is submitted previous to that of spinning, are carried on in factories, called "scribbling and slubbing mills." The spinning of the yarn, and the weaving of the cloth, though sometimes carried on in factories (especially in the case of the superfine cloths made in the town of Leeds), are generally performed in the cloth-maker's family; whilst all the finishing processes subsequent to weaving, such as scouring, fulling, raising, cutting and pressing, are completed in factories.

The wool having been sorted (for the fleece consists of many qualities), and a sufficient quantity of a given sort or quality chosen, it is first washed, and unless intended for white cloth, is dyed. The common colours, such as browns and olives, are dyed by the manufacturers themselves; but the *true* or *woaded* colours, such as blue, wool-black and green, are dyed by dyers. When dyed, it is carefully dried and willowed, when it is ready for the processes of the scribbling and slubbing mill. Sorting is a business requiring great skill; good sorters will earn from 25*s.* to 30*s.* per week, and very skilful hands even more.

Delivered at the mill in its dried state, the wool is first passed over the spiked cylinder of a machine, called in some places a *shakewilley*, but better known under the name of a "devil." The spiked cylinder makes as many as 300 revolutions per minute, and the effect is, to separate the fibre of the wool, which is blown out of the machine at the opposite end to that at which it was received, by a revolving fan.

The wool thus separated, is oiled, and then taken to the scribbling rooms, where it is passed through the scribblers, equal quantities by weight being distributed over a moving stage or drum, by girls called fillers, who earn from 3*s.* to 6*s.* per week. By the motion of this drum, the cylinders covered with wires, similar to the old hand cards, are gradually and equally fed. When delivered from the scribbling machine, the fibre is in a state of more perfect separation, yet hanging together in a sort of continuous web, which is wound around a cylinder, whence it is taken to be submitted to the next process, namely, that of carding.

The carding cylinders are similar to the scribblers, except that the wires with which they are covered, are finer; besides this, instead of being rolled off, as above described, the portions of the wool are scraped off, and received upon a grooved cylinder, each groove shaping the portions of wool so scraped off, into *cardings*, in which state they are ready for slubbing. The fillers of the carding machines are also girls, earning the same as the scribbler fillers.

Slubbing is merely the first process of spinning; it is performed with a machine called a slubbing-billy, something similar to the jenny, and containing 60 spindles, The cardings are taken from the carding machine by children, called pieceners, or piecers, and are joined to the ends of the cardings previously placed on the slubbing board, by a slight rolling motion of the fingers. As these cardings are slubbed, more are supplied, and, to prevent any thickening of the yarn when slubbed where the union takes place, the carding is rendered thinner by the carding machine, for a space about two inches at each end.

The pieceners or piecers, as they are indifferently called, are children of both sexes. The "half-timers" will earn 1*s.* 9*d.* to 2*s.*, and the "whole-timers" 3*s.* 6*d.* to 4*s.* 6*d.*; the slubber, or billy-man, will earn from 20*s.* to 32*s.* per week, the variation arising partly from skill, and partly from the rate of wages paid in different localities.

In the larger factories in and about Leeds, all the processes of cloth-making are carried on, from the breaking of the fleece to the packing of the cloth for market. The slubbing is carried to the mule, where it is spun; piecers are here also required, but their business differs from that already described. The operation of the mule is to unwind a certain length of slubbing from the cop; and when enough is unwound, it is then held fast, elongated about three-fold, and

spun

spun into yarn of the required fineness for warp and weft. In this process of elongation the yarn is apt to break, and it is the business of the mule pieceners to unite the ends. The mule pieceners earn about 1*s.* more than the first named.

In the clothing villages at a distance from Leeds, it is more commonly the practice for the master manufacturer to deliver the work to the cloth-maker in the state of slubbing, in which case the jenny of 60 spindles is employed, instead of the mule, one jenny being considered capable of keeping two looms employed.

After the cloth is woven, it is taken to the mill and scoured, so as to deprive it of the oil used in the process of scribbling, and of the size with which the warp is always prepared. After being scoured, it is *burled*, a process performed by women and girls with nippers, the object being to pick out knots, lint, straws and other imperfections. It is then taken back to the mill, where it is fulled, or milled, being soaped and beaten in a wet state with heavy wooden hammers, by which the cloth is thickened, being at the same time reduced in width from about twelve to seven quarters in the finer qualities, and proportionally in the coarser kinds, which are woven narrower in the loom. It is also reduced, perhaps one-fifth, one-fourth or more, in length; after this, the cloth is again scoured, to free it from the soap; and, after being dried either in the open air, or in a drying house, it is dressed, by being passed over a cylinder, armed with teazles, by which all loose fibres are brought to the surface; it is then sheared or cut as closely as possible, and after being stretched even and brushed smooth, is pressed between heated plates, and packed for market.

These preliminary remarks, especially such as relate to the several processes down to that of burling, are absolutely necessary to render intelligible the language of many of the witnesses, in whose evidence most of the terms explained above, will be found of constant occurrence.

My first inquiries were directed to the condition of the woollen-cloth weavers of the town and borough of Leeds; they were afterwards extended to the several clothing villages comprised in the following Table, and completing the clothing district around Leeds:—

Name of Township or Village.	Distance from Leeds.	Population.			Number of Looms.	
		1821.	1831.	Increase.		
1. Leeds	-	48,603	71,602	22,999	1,326 *	* 541 cloth; 725 stuff; 60 carpet. Of the linen looms I have no account.
2. Hunslet	1 mile	8,171	12,074	3,903	115	
3. Holbeck	2 „	7,151	11,210	4,059	285	
4. Beeston	2 „	1,670	2,128	458	69	
5. Mill Shaw						
6. Wortley	3 „	3,179	5,944	2,765	764	
7. Farnley	4 „	1,332	1,591	259	135	
8. Armley	2 „	4,273	5,159	886	674	
9. Bramley	4 „	4,916	7,039	2,123	870	
Total Borough		79,295	116,837	37,542 †	4,238	† These numbers include only the clothing townships of the borough. The agricultural townships are, Headingly, Potter Newton and Chapel-Allerton.
10. Horsforth	6 „	2,828	3,425	597	360	
11. Rawden	7 „	1,759	2,057	298	317	
12. Yeadon	8 „	2,455	2,761	306	551	
13. Guiseley	9 „	1,213	1,604	391	340	
14. Farsley	7 „	- -	- -	- -	445	
15. Calverley	8 „	2,605	2,637	32		
16. Apperly Bridge		- -	- -	- -	208	
17. Eccleshill	9 „	2,171	2,570	399	360 ‡	‡ 20 worsted looms.
18. Idle	9 „	4,666	5,416	750	463 §	§ 42 ditto.
19. Thorpe						
20. Bolton	10 „	634	671	37	42	
21. Shipley	11 „	1,606	1,926	320	102 ‖	‖ 60 stuff, besides 400 out of use.
22. Pudsey	6 „	6,229	7,460	1,231	1,357 ¶	¶ 75 worsted.
23. Stanningley	- accounts included in Pudsey, Bramley and Farsley.					
24. Churwell	3 „	814	1.023	209	42	
25. Gildersome	4 „	1,592	1,652	60	120	
26. Morley	4 „	3,039	3,819	780	444	
27. Driglington	-	1,719	1,676	decrease 43	46	
28. Adwalton						
29. Great Gommersal	-	- -	- -	- -	130	
30. Little ditto	-	5,952	6,189	237	30	
31. Birstall	-				146	
32. Birkenshaw	-	- -	- -	- -	38***	*** 10 worsted looms.
33. Cleckheaton	-	2,436	3,317	881	250††	†† 30 ditto.
Totals		121,013	165,040	44,027	10,029	

Yorkshire (West Riding)

Report from *H. S. Chapman*, Esq.

On opening my inquiry at Leeds,* I found the weavers themselves very generally prepared with evidence as to their actual condition. When the existence of the commission was first announced, they were, and had for some time been, in a state of extreme distress, from a long stagnation of trade, and consequent diminution of employment: hence they had both the leisure and the motive to collect evidence, for the purpose of laying the same before the Assistant Commissioner. Nearly all the tables of earnings put in evidence by the several witnesses were collected with this view, and I have every reason to believe they afford a faithful exhibition of the pecuniary condition of a large number of weavers in various parts of the district during the year 1837: when I visited the district in July and August 1838, however, an improvement had taken place, a circumstance which afforded me a favourable opportunity of estimating the weavers' condition in the extreme cases of full employment and unusual depression.

Sensible that all vague statements of average earnings are calculated to mislead, or, at all events, not calculated to inform, I took pains to investigate as many individual cases as possible, in order that the weaver might be seen under every possible modification of condition; and here I think it will be well to consider the weaver alone, without reference to the effects produced upon his condition by his family, consisting, be it observed, of contributors to his income, as well as consumers.

By the table already given, it will be seen that there are in the district now under notice upwards of 10,000 looms; and as the number of weavers without looms is probably about counterbalanced by the number of persons owning a plurality of looms, we may safely assume, that there are 10,000 weavers: now, of all that number, the proportion able to secure good wages and constant employment, is extremely inconsiderable, by far the greater number bearing out the supposition raised in the instructions,† that they are suffering from "insufficient wages and excessive toil."

It is in Leeds that the best cloths are made: for the best work the best wages are, of course, given, simply because the most skilful and careful hands are required; hence the 541 weavers who find employment in the town of Leeds may be considered as the best in the district. Among the employers of Leeds, the house of Hirst, Bramley & Co. enjoys the reputation, both among masters and men, of giving the best wages for the very best work in the market: as they attend to the comfort of the people they employ, so also do they require good conduct, and I found it generally allowed that they have the best workmen. They employ 146 weavers, who may be considered to have passed the ordeal of a double process of sifting; the town having the best men in the district, and they the best men in the town. The following statement of the total earnings of these weavers was furnished me by Messrs. Hirst, Bramley & Co.

"April, May, June - - - - -	£. 1,770
July, August, September - - - -	1,792
	£. 3,562

"earned by 146 weavers, makes rather above 1 *l.* per week each man." This is an error, as the sum divided among 146 persons for 26 weeks,‡ will be found to give only 18 *s.* 9 *d.* each on the average. But the range of earnings exhibited by these men, who, being picked men, might be expected to be tolerably equal in point of skill, will show how fallacious are average statements for all useful purposes,—for all purposes indeed except that of breaking down all distinctions of skill, diligence and strength, and producing an appearance of uniformity which never did and never can exist. The paper goes on to state,—

"One man having had a full average of good work, has made in these six months 16 *s.* 4 *d.* a week; the man on the next loom to him has earned in the same time, and with the same work, 24 *s.* a week; the best weaver we have has earned,

* In the first instance I held my inquiry in the morning; but, finding great difficulty in obtaining the attendance of the weavers, I soon afterwards adopted the practice of evening meetings. The result was satisfactory: instead of the mere attendance of a few persons *prepared* to give evidence, I had generally crowded meetings; the result of which was, a great deal of unpremeditated and most valuable testimony; besides which, statements would be occasionally questioned, and not unfrequently corrected, on the spot.

† Page 4.

‡ The error seems to have arisen from taking six months of four weeks each.

earned, with not quite such good work, in the same time, 28 *s.* a week."* Here, then, we have a difference of earning arising out of skill, strength and diligence alone, excluding greater duration of labour, of nearly 50 per cent. This difference in skill is stated in the evidence of Mr. Henry Wilkinson, overlooker in the factory of Messrs. Ripley & Ogle:—

"22.† What time should you consider a good workman ought to take to weave the highest set, working 12 hours a day?—He should do it in 15 days.

"23. I do not mean an average, I mean the best men, who work steadily, and make the most of their time?—Yes; worse workmen and less steady men might make a *difference of a week* in the web."

Messrs. Ripley & Ogle are also manufacturers of the finest cloths; they give the best wages the market will afford, and they have good workmen, but they do not give such steady employment to their hands as Messrs. Hirst, Bramley & Co., who are, I was informed, the only house in Leeds which had, during the whole of the preceding four years, given constant employment to their people: the earnings of Messrs. Ripley & Ogle's weavers are consequently somewhat below those of Messrs. Hirst, Bramley & Co. I again quote the evidence of Mr. Henry Wilkinson on this head:—

"25. Are you able to furnish constant work to your weavers?—No, we are not; for three or four years we have not done so.

"26. Supposing three weeks to be required to weave a piece of 108 set, it would make 17 in the year; is there any man to whom you have been able to give 17 pieces?—No, there is not.

"27. What is the loss of time from unavoidable causes?—I was looking over our account the other day, and I find our very best men average about 46 *l.* a year, or 17 *s.* 8½ *d.* a week."

Thus the whole of Hirst, Bramley & Co.'s men earn upwards of 1 *s.* a week more than Ripley & Ogle's "very best men," because the number of weavers is such, that Messrs. Ripley & Ogle, who give out work, divide their work among a greater number than they can fully employ; whilst Hirst, Bramley & Co. confine their work to the selected few entirely under their own roof.

It may now be well to adduce the evidence of some of the weavers themselves; but before doing so, it will be necessary to explain a few technical terms.

1. The *String* is a measure of length by which wages are paid, and the length of the warp estimated; it is three yards and one foot, or 10 feet. The warp of superfine cloth is usually 18 strings, or 60 yards, in length; the lower kinds of cloth usually run longer.

2. The *Porteth*‡ is 38 threads of warp; and,

3. The *Set* indicates the number of porteths in the width. There are some broad cloths as coarse as to have only 27 porteths in the width, whilst there are others which have 108, 110, 112, and even 115; 80 is considered a medium in superfine cloths.

4. The *Wartern*,§ or *whartern*, is a quantity of yarn weighing 6 lbs., without regard to fineness of spinning.

5. The *Skein* is 1,520 yards.

The greater number of skeins to the wartern, the finer is the yarn spun; thus, 25 skeins to the wartern is 6 lbs. of wool spun into 38,000 yards, whilst 18 skeins to the wartern is 6 lbs. spun into 27,360 yards, and so forth.

The following extracts from the evidence of Joseph Best, will show what he considered the earnings of a good weaver:—

"11. Taking 80 porteths as an average set, what is the rate paid per string?—That depends much on the mode of doing the work; wages will vary at the same time from 1 *s.* 6 *d.* to 2 *s.* 4 *d.* per string,‖ and different employers will be giving 1 *s.* 10 *d.* and 2 *s.* 4 *d.* for the same work. Variations for different modes of weaving

* Supposing the same error to have crept in, it would reduce those figures to 15 *s.* 6 *d.*, 1 *l.* 2 *s.* 6 *d.*, and 1 *l.* 6 *s.* 3 *d.*

† The questions put to every witness are numbered separately.

‡ It is sometimes written *portie* and *portiff*. As I was unable to discover either its derivation or its proper orthography, I write it as I usually heard it.

§ Quære, *watering*; but the same remark applies to this term as to the word *porteth*.

‖ Hirst, Bramley & Co.'s price for 80, is 2 *s.* 6 *d.*; Ripley & Ogle's, 2 *s.* 5 *d.*

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weaving I consider fair; variations by masters for the same work I consider unfair.

"12. A piece of cloth of the average you have stated, namely, 80 porteths and 18 strings, what time would it take to weave?—Three weeks to weave it in a proper manner, including the taking out and delivering in; and to do this, he must be a good workman, and must work 14 hours a day, deducting two hours for meals." * * *

"14. According to the above data, the week's wages will amount to from 11*s.* to 14*s.* per week; do you consider that conformable with the truth?—I dare engage that it is the truth."

Now, 14*s.* a week is so much below Hirst, Bramley & Co.'s average of 18*s.* 9*d.*, that it demands careful examination: first, Hirst & Bramley's price is two-pence per string higher than the highest price commonly paid for that set, added to which, a loss of three days only per warp for receiving and delivering in the piece is saved by those who work in a factory; these two items will be found to raise the 14*s.* to 18*s.* at once; but there are very few who work in a factory, and still fewer who can manage to secure 2*s.* 6*d.* or even 2*s.* 4*d.* for weaving cloth of 80 set; hence, Joseph Best's statement becomes entitled to credit, as exhibiting the earnings of a large number when well employed.

James Stead, an intelligent and steady man of good character, stated his own gross earnings to be considerably below this, as the following extracts will testify:—

"5. What have you been working at lately?—Broad cloth of 70 porteths.

"6. What price were you paid for that set?—One shilling and nine-pence per string.

"7. What time would it take you to weave a piece of that description?—It would take me 18 working days, or three weeks, to weave the piece of 20 strings, working at least 12 hours a day."

This would yield only 11*s.* 8*d.* per week; but there are many weavers who would do the work in much less time, on which point let Joseph Middlebrook, of Bramley, speak—

"3. What kind of goods are you weaving?—Fine cloth. I am now weaving an 84 blue.

"4. What rate are you paid?—Two shillings per string, and I speak it with credit to my employer, for there are many paid less.

"5. I presume the piece is 18 strings?—My piece has been 19 strings; they vary from 18 to 20 strings.

"6. What time do you take in weaving such a piece?—It varies very much; I have half done this piece, and I think I can finish it in a fortnight from the day I commenced; but I have worked 16 hours a day, and more, and I have not taken two hours a day for all my meals."

That is 192 hours to weave 19 strings=182 hours for 18 strings of a much higher set than James Stead took 216 hours (or 19 per cent. longer) to weave. This is another proof of the difference of skill, and perhaps power of application; for James Stead is unquestionably a steady and industrious man, as I have already stated. At the above rate and quantity of labour, Joseph Middlebrook's gross earnings would reach 19*s.* a week if at all times employed; but 16 hours a day is more than the human constitution will endure. Then there is a delay of two, and sometimes three days between taking home the piece and getting a fresh warp; a delay which, with an occasional reduction in the hours of work, would reduce his earnings to perhaps 14*s.*

Joseph Cromack, of Armley, was examined as follows as to his own earnings:—

"1. You are a hand-loom weaver?—Yes, I have been so 25 years.

"2. What are you working upon?—Woollen cloth. I am now weaving a web of 76 porteths, 20 strings.

"3. How long will it take you to complete it?—A fortnight.

"4. What are you paid for it?—Two shillings and a penny per string."

This would make 20*s.* 10*d.* per week gross wages. Let us now take the statement of Samuel Metcalf, of the same place:—

"5. What goods were you last employed upon?—A 70 cloth was the last. I got 2*s.* 2*d.* per string for weaving, spinning, and every other work. Another man

man took the wool, and I did the weaving, and got 1*s.* 2½*d.* per string; but it was thicker spun, and I did better than I could have done on other goods at higher wages.

"6. How long did it take you to weave?—Seven days. I had a distance to walk to the loom; if I had had it in my own chamber, I could have done it in six days." This is equivalent to 21*s.* 9*d.* per week. It is unnecessary to go further into detail; but it may be well to bring under one view the statements of the several witnesses examined for the borough of Leeds alone as to their actual gross earnings at the time of examination, including in the list the statements furnished by Messrs. Hirst, Bramley & Co., and by the overlooker of Messrs. Ripley & Ogle, adding the ages of the workers, where it is possible so to do:—

	Gross Earnings.	Net Earnings.	
	£. s. d.	£. s. d.	
Lowest of Messrs. Hirst & Co.'s workers	– 15 6		Working in factory, the weaver is subject to no deductions; they are allowed, in most cases, 2*s.* for putting up, and 3*s.* for sizing.
Another weaver at the same work	1 2 6		
Average of the whole	– 18 9		
Highest of all their weavers	1 6 –		
Average of Messrs. Ripley & Ogle's best workers only	– 17 8		
Lower hands	– 15 –	– 13 6	
Joseph Best, aged 42	– 14 –	– 12 6	
James Stead, aged 43	– 11 6	– 10 –	
Joseph Middlebrook, aged 55	– 19 –	– 17 6	
Ditto shorter hours	– 14 –	– 12 6	
James Cromack, aged 40	1 – 10	– 19 4	
Samuel Metcalf, aged 42	1 1 9	1 – 6	
James Whitacre, aged 42	– 12 4	– 10 10	
Abraham Worsnop, aged 35	– 16 6	– 15 –	
Ditto (can earn, if fully employed)	– 17 1	– 15 6	
Ditto earned in 1837, exactly	– 11 – ½	– 9 7½	
Joseph Stansfield, aged 46	– 16 3	– 14 9	
Charles Vickers	– 13 6	– 12 –	
Joseph Woobank, aged 22	– 9 –	– 7 6	
Benjamin Packet	– 12 6	– 11 –	
J. Clapham, about 48	– 10 –	– 8 6	
G. Appleyard	– 13 –	– 11 6	
George Auty	– 15 –	– 13 6	
Benjamin Kirk, about 55	– 13 6	– 12 –	
J. Dawson	– 9 9	– 8 3	
J. Davy	– 17 2	– 15 8	
J. Daly	– 11 –	– 9 6	
J. Briggs	– 13 –	– 11 6	
Joseph Walker	– 9 6	– 8 –	
S. Deane	– 16 6	– 15 –	
William Smith, aged 23	– 15 –	– 13 3	
J. Tate	– 17 –	– 15 6	
J. Whalley	– 14 6	– 13 –	

It should be observed, that the first column exhibits the gross earnings, from which must be deducted* certain expenses to which the weaver is unavoidably put†. His loom, for instance, costs from 8*l.* to 10*l.*, besides which, he must have a larger house, to afford him one room for weaving. For this additional rent, and the wear and tear of loom, it is usual to allow 1*s.* per week; indeed, those who have not looms, pay that sum. Again, in winter the weaver requires candles, and in some places he has to pay for sizing his warp: in the borough of Leeds, however, to which I am now confining myself, an allowance for sizing is usually made by the manufacturer. These allowances are stated by all the witnesses, with no great variation; it will be sufficient to quote the evidence of Joseph Best:—

"14. Now,

* Instructions, I. 3d, p. 8.

† A caution is here necessary against running into the error of supposing that these earnings can be secured all the year round. They are the earnings which the witnesses stated they could make *when fully employed*. It will be seen hereafter, that they are rarely fully employed; in 1837, for instance, they were not much over half employed, and there is scarcely a year in which there are not some unemployed. The subject will be hereafter treated; the caution is all that is necessary here.

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"14. Now, from the above wages, what deductions are to be made?—In the first place, there is 1*s.* a week for hire of loom and stand; in the next place, there are lights, which will cost 1*s.* a week in winter, and may be fixed at 6*d.* all the year round. In some firms no allowance is made for sizing, whilst it is allowed for in others. Where it is paid for by the weaver, it will be 1*s.* 3*d.* for the whole piece.

"15. Generally speaking, it is, I believe, paid for by the employer?—In the borough of Leeds it is, but in many of the villages around it is paid for by the weaver.

"16. Generally speaking, does the weaver own his own loom?—In domestic weaving he does, and sometimes owns an additional loom or two, in which case his condition is better by 1*s.* a week for each loom."

Leaving sizing out of the account, therefore, the weaver is put to the expense of at least 1*s.* 6*d.* per week, which must be taken from his gross earnings, leaving the net sums in the second column.

It will be observed, that in the above list there are weavers of various powers and capacities. Young men just out of their time—men of full vigour—men of increasing years, and declining strength. There are also men of various degrees of skill and habits of application, but I am not aware of a single dissolute and worthless character being upon the list. As far as I had opportunities of inquiring—and I made it my business to seek such opportunities—I found the witnesses to enjoy a reputation for good conduct, which would bear strict scrutiny. Moreover, the differences exhibited in many cases arose from the peculiarity of work. Samuel Metcalf, for instance, who in one week earned 21*s.* 9*d.*, might, with equal diligence, be no better off the week after than James Whitaker, who stated his last week's earnings at 12*s.* 4*d.*; for James Whitaker I ascertained to be as good a man as Samuel Metcalf; intelligent his testimony, which will be hereafter quoted, shows him to be; and well conducted, industrious and skilful, I ascertained him to be.

Although I have given my opinion, that the mere statement of an average is especially fallacious, I think, prepared as we are by individual cases, we may now look with advantage at those points of the whole scale of earnings, at which the largest number of cases occur. On examination, it will be found that

			s.	*s.*
4	earned over		20	
9	„ from		16	to 20
13	„ „		12	„ 16
4	„ „		10	„ 12
3	„ under		10	
33				

It has been already stated, that these earnings suppose full employment, that is, with no more delay than is incidental to fetching the warp, and carrying home the piece. If employment were steady,—if all the cloth-weavers* in the West Riding could earn the wages stated in the table, however desirable it might be to improve their condition, I very much doubt if they themselves would have complained. It unfortunately happens, however, that full employment is rare. We have already seen, that even Messrs. Ripley & Ogle, who carry on an extensive business, cannot at all times give employment to their hands. Out of the 10,000 weavers in the district, it is rare—perhaps I ought rather to say, it never occurs—that some are not out of work. On this point, the following testimony may be offered:—

"20. Is there now full employment for weavers?—It is much better than it was in 1836 and 1837; but there are still some out of employment. There are also many who are only partially employed.

"21. You yourself stated, that your looms are idle; how long have they been so?—About three weeks.

"22. You

* I have thought it convenient to postpone all considerations of the former earnings of the cloth-weavers until I have gone through all the facts of their present condition.

"22. You say, that during 1836 and 1837 employment was slack; did that affect wages?—Wages have not risen since. In the best of times there are always men enough out of employment to keep down wages."—[*Joseph Best's Evidence.*]

Joseph Cromack, who stated himself to be able, with good work and constant employment, to earn 20 *s.* a week, said his earnings in 1837 would not average more than 13 *s.* a week. In like manner, Abraham Worsnop gave evidence as follows:—

"6. If I could have full employment all the year, as I have had for the last three months, I could earn 17*s.* a week; but that would be rather over than under.

"7. Had you full employment last year?—No; from November to November I made exactly 11*s.* 1½*d.*; and, previous to this quarter, I have stated I was one month, and I had not an hour's work."

It has been already stated, that the papers put in by the several witnesses referred exclusively to the year 1837. The statement for the township of Holbeck, delivered in by Joseph Best, shows the total net earnings of 174 men to have been 3,130 *l.*, which will make an average of just 7*s.* per week. This would make it appear, that in 1837 the weavers of that township were not above half employed.

The statement for Armley, given in evidence by James Cromack, makes the average earnings of the weavers of that township in 1837, 9*s.* a week. The Bramley statement, put in by Joseph Middlebrook, is rather better, as it makes 10*s.* 6*d.*

To estimate the exact measure of these periods of depression, would be quite impossible. There can be no doubt, however, of their constant occurrence. Their injurious effects upon the condition of the weaver, it is easy to perceive, must be much more intense than a permanent reduction of wages with constant work. The habits of a people, receiving at all times 10*s.* a week, would be much more conducive to their own comfort, in every way, than the same average sum distributed in the shape of higher wages, during one part of the year, lower wages during another, and no wages at all during a third portion; yet this is precisely the fluctuating condition to which the cloth-weaver is liable.

In the evidence taken at Horsforth, a clothing township just without the limits of the borough of Leeds, an attempt was made to estimate the average effects of periods of depression. First, as to the severe suffering of 1837, one witness, Charles Fletcher, gave evidence as follows:—

"13. Have you any statement of the earnings of last year?—I have a statement made out, by going from house to house, when we first heard of the commission, in December last (1837). We took a report of earnings from 340 looms, and the whole sum earned was 5,374 *l.* 15*s.*, which gives 15*l.* 16*s.* 2*d.* each loom, good workmen and bad workmen, taken altogether; the weekly average would be 6*s.* 1*d.*; from that there is deducted for rent, light and repairs, of 1*s.* 3*d.*, which leaves a weekly average of 4*s.* 10*d.*" Accompanying the evidence of the above witness, is a written statement, from which the following is taken. It embodies the estimate alluded to:—

"It was also ascertained, that the weavers of Horsforth, *if fully employed*, would average 12*s.* a week, taking skilled and unskilled persons together; some would earn a little more, and some less; but it was found that the weavers in Horsforth are unemployed one-sixth part of their time, which will make their average earnings 10*s.*; from this sum there will be 1*s.* 3*d.* to be deducted for rent, for the loom, light, &c., leaving 8*s.* 9*d.* per loom* for the weavers of Horsforth." One of the witnesses examined at Yeadon, a township a few miles north-west of Horsforth, said, at the conclusion of his evidence, "I wish also to state, that we have had four panics in eight years; the first lasted half a year, the two next a quarter of a year each, and the last half a year," adding something for the fact already stated, that there are always some few out of employment at the best of times, the Horsforth estimate, of one-sixth as an average, receives confirmation.

It

* Meaning, per weaver.

Yorkshire (West Riding.)

Report from *H. S. Chapman*, Esq.

It may now be proper to estimate the means of alleviating the temporary distresses consequent upon a period of commercial stagnation, within the reach of the weaving population. And here I shall call attention to the statement of one of the witnesses examined at Pudsey, because it is equally applicable to other townships.

James Swithenbank was asked (question 25), "Do the weavers here understand any other work, or have they any other to resort to?"* His answer was, "We are peculiarly a village of clothiers." The whole district around Leeds is, in fact, "a district of clothiers;" and, when that trade fails, there is nothing to resort to. Here and there, it is true, there may be a stone-quarry,† or a coal-pit,‡ or an iron-foundry.§ At times, too, a road may be cut, or a piece of rough land‖ levelled, but the former employments are full of hands even to the overflowing; and as for the latter, they are too insignificant to deserve the name of relief. A few pieces of evidence, taken almost at random, rather than selected from the mass, will confirm the above statement. The following is from Joseph Best's evidence:—

"27. Do you yourself ever engage in other work?—I do not engage in any other trade; but, occasionally, in haymaking time I quit my loom, and make hay.

"28. Is that general?—It is not so general as it used to be; the Irish come over, and work for so little, that it is not now worth while.

"29. When this is done, what is paid?—Sometimes 2*s.* 6*d.* a day is paid; at others, the men are taken from the loom for a few hours only, and get nothing but bread and cheese, and beer. It is seldom that this occupies more than four days."

The evidence of Benjamin Lee, a small manufacturer of Bramley, is to the same effect:—

"16. Do the weavers of Bramley resort to any other employment?—Yes; it is a common thing to go to haymaking. If a manufacturer occupies land, he calls off his weavers to make hay; but it is rare that they get money. They get bread and cheese, and beer; sometimes they get money; half-a-crown a day; but it does not last long, from beginning to end. We are visited every year by a number of men from Ireland, who do that work."¶ The evidence on this point might be extended, but it appears to be unnecessary.

With regard to the pecuniary relief** afforded to the population of Leeds, including such weavers as may be in great distress, Mr. Samuel Maud, who has been for many years connected with charitable institutions, gave minute testimony, extending as far back as 1816, which was the first period of severe distress within his recollection. The following extracts from his testimony are all that seem necessary here:—

In reference to the winter of 1831, 2, the witness put in a paper, showing that the society to which he belonged collected during that winter 4,813*l.* 17*s.* 3*d.*, with which 5,784 families were relieved.†† Among these, 1,043 only were weavers; namely,

Cloth weavers	384
Stuff ,,	430
Linen ,,	155
Carpet ,,	61
Stocking ,,	13
Total	1,043

"11. What was the scale of relief at that period?—We gave from 1*s.* 6*d.* to 6*s.*, according to the size of the family, and it was given in flour and clothing. The

* Instructions, § 4, p. 8.
† At Bramley.
‡ About Morley, Churwell, and other places.
§ At Kirkstall.
‖ Woodhouse Moor, Leeds, was levelled for the purpose of giving employment to the distressed, and a stone quarry at Bramley was filled up in 1836, 7.
¶ Benjamin Lee did not hear the evidence of Joseph Best.
** Instructions, § 8, p. 10.
†† £. 4,813 may seem a considerable sum, but it amounts to only 16*s.* 7*d.* per family, or about one week's wages, to people perhaps 15 or 20 weeks out of work.

Yorkshire (West Riding.)

Report from *H. S. Chapman*, Esq.

The Benevolent Society is always in existence; but about every four years* they are called upon to make extraordinary exertions to keep the poorer class from perishing. At these extraordinary periods the weavers suffer great extremities. In 1826, after the panic, 739 families were relieved, comprising 53 trades or callings, and out of these there were 369 families of weavers for one section of the town, which was assigned to my inspection.

"12. How were the funds raised?—The ordinary funds by subscription, and the extraordinary funds by extra contributions and collections at places of worship.

"13. Has there been any call lately?—Last year we found it necessary to make an extra call, and it was responded to, to an extent to enable us to give considerable relief.

"14. In going your round, you must have seen much destitution?—It is impossible to describe it. Last year there was not much sickness, but the destitution, from want of employment, was very great. * * *

"22. There are other societies similar to the above?—There is one called the Church Visiting Society.

"23. Does that society extend its funds at periods of distress, by extraordinary means?—It does."

In the township of Bramley, in the autumn of 1837, a sum of 392 *l.* 15 *s.* was raised, which was divided among 2,347 families, being about 3 *s.* 4 *d.* per family. In fact, all relief must be on the same inefficient scale.

Few people take the trouble to think of the small proportion which the largest sums raised by the benevolent for such purposes bear to a few weeks' wages. To say that the 10,000 weavers of the district around Leeds were out of employment three months in 1837, is, I am convinced, within the truth; as an aggregate average, calling wages only 10 *s.* per week, we have a sum of 65,000 *l.*, of which the weaving population were deprived. Now, I venture to assert, that from all extraneous sources not a tithe of that sum was distributed among the weavers. We often felicitate ourselves on the large sums raised to relieve the distresses of particular classes during periods of depression; but we are too apt to overlook the extent of the evil to be remedied. No relief, in fact, can make up for even a short period of stagnation. When the general rate of wages is low, as in the case of the weavers, as well as in that of the agricultural labourers, there must be acute suffering; it is for this reason that it is especially incumbent on the Legislature to avoid all measures which have a tendency to promote, rather than check,

* Rather oftener, it appears; for the following statement of relief in 1829–30, I extracted from the Leeds Mercury:—

	Families.	Individuals.	Week's Income. £. s. d.	Relief. £. s. d.	Claims rejected.	Remarks.
Month ending 8 January -	1,475	6,207	191 16 7½	881 11 –	401	
Week ending 14 January -	305	1,168	29 2 5	181 16 6	74	Some relieved a second time.
21 „ -	458	1,661	48 – 11	251 10 6	68	Half had been already relieved.
28 „ -	445	1,940	49 19 7	198 8 –	88	Hard frost.
4 February	451	1,800	49 – –	201 – –	78	
11 „ -	336	1,393	27 17 3	164 13 6	74	Weather milder. J. Brown & Co.'s weavers subscribed £. 44.
18 „ -	536	2,244	57 2 2½	266 10 2	37	Distress among the stuff-weavers great.
25 „ -	484	1,916	50 2 2	209 – –	47	
4 March -	292	1,140	26 9 9	101 – –	34	Stuff weavers getting into work, but at reduced wages.
11 „ -	399	1,668	47 7 5½	131 7 –	31	
	5,181	21,137	573 8 6	2,587 1 8	932	

A income, 2 *s.* 2½ *d.* Relief per family, about 10 *s.*

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check commercial fluctuations, by far the most serious evil the weaver has to endure.

As to private charity,* I had no means, indeed there can be no means, of ascertaining its extent. The benevolent man who gives privately, is not likely to make a boast of it; if he desired the world to talk about him, he would put his name down upon a subscription list. Many there are who do enormous good in individual cases, who are never tired of aiding the distressed, of sympathising with the wretched, of consoling the bereaved. Some cases of this kind have come within my own knowledge; but when we consider the ten thousand weavers subject to severe distress, for many weeks, we are bound to conclude that private charity can contribute but little to their relief.

With regard to parochial relief, the resort of the weavers thereto, as far as I could ascertain, is exceedingly rare. They are for the most part actuated by a manly spirit of independence, and they suffer rather than ask for aid from that source.† The weavers are rated, and contribute to the poor-rates; and I was informed by a magistrate in the course of private conversation, that they are occasionally excused the payment of rates where their distress is obvious. The effect of this is, to save their furniture from seizure; but considered as a form of relief, it is as nothing. Touching the profits derived by the weavers from election abuses,‡ it is only necessary to mention, that the rent they usually pay varies from 3*l.* 10*s.* to 7*l.* 10*s.*, and is generally about 4*l.* or 5*l.*

If, then, the means of relief be in each case so exceedingly trifling, how, it may be asked, does the weaver possibly live during long periods of distress? I asked the question in so many words of one man, and he answered, "It is a miracle; we hardly know ourselves." This, however, is certain, that they chiefly depend on their own resources; those who happen to have saved a little, find themselves compelled to break in upon their little store; and those who are not so fortunate, or perhaps less provident, fall into debt, which they liquidate in better times. There is also much private charity among them towards each other; those who are distressed in a less degree, giving assistance in the shape of food principally to the starving children of those who are more distressed. To push questions in open court on these points to any considerable extent, would have been indelicate and unwarrantable. An industrious weaver, of independent and generous feelings, is not more likely to relish questions as to the debts he has contracted, or the bread he may have given away, than persons in a more favourable position in society; and although I felt it my duty to ascertain the fact, I confess when I (in imagination) changed places with my weaver-witnesses, I felt extreme repugnance to an examination on the subject (further than in general terms) in open court; but in all the private conversations which I had, as well with the weavers themselves, as with others well acquainted with their habits, the statements made to me fully bore out what I have recorded above. The voluntary evidence of one of the witnesses at Bramley, on this point, merits notice:—

"3. What kind of goods are you weaving?—I am weaving a 76; it is a double piece, 43 strings; I owed him (the manufacturer for whom he was working) some rent, owing to the distress of last year; when I commenced work, I owed him 11*l.*, and he would not agree to give me work, unless I paid him half what I earned. If I earn 15*s.* a week, I receive 7*s.* 6*d.*; the other goes against the debt.

"4. By working hard, can you earn 15*s.* a-week?—Yes, during summer, by working from five o'clock in the morning till nine at night, which I have often done.

"5. Does he exact it rigidly?—Yes; if I got 5*s.*, he would take 2*s.* 6*d.* * * I should observe, that in weaving ten webs, I have waited for work five weeks in all, and that in five or six months: they have been long webs: as I am in debt, he robs others of their work to favour me, or rather himself, by giving me double webs." * * *

"8. Are many in difficulty from having got into debt last year?—Yes, there are many like me, or I might be ashamed to speak of it; I cannot look to the right

or

* Instructions, § 8, p. 10.

† On this point a comprehensive Parliamentary return would afford better evidence than could be obtained by other means.

‡ Instruction, p. 10.

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or the left, without seeing others like me. It will take me 12 months to get out of my shop debts. I got into debt 12*s.* to one shopkeeper; he failed, and paid 5*s.* in the pound, but they sent a bailiff after me, and the costs were 30*s.*"

Benefit societies of some kind are almost universally resorted to by the weaving population; less so, however, in the form of societies certified under the Act of Parliament, than in that of free gifts, secret orders, sick clubs and funeral briefs. Abundant evidence on this subject was afforded me; but the testimony of William Kershawe, of Birstall, is so ample, that I shall extract the portion relating to the subject at length:—

"6. Do the people of Birstall generally subscribe to benefit societies?—I do not think there is a parish in the Kingdom where the practice is more general. I have a particular opportunity of knowing that the people of the whole township, both male and female, are particularly desirous of subscribing both to sick clubs and burial societies. Even if they have only 7*s.* or 8*s.* a week, they contrive to spare enough for this.

"7. What opportunities have you had of knowing?—I have acted as officer of several societies.

"8. In case of sickness, then, there are not many applications to the parish?—No; there is a general independent spirit, so far as the means will allow. The benefit clubs, secret orders and free gifts, provide against sickness, and some of them give travelling cards, to enable those who are out of employment to seek it; and this prevents applications to the parish, and preserves independence.

"9. What is the nature of these travelling cards?—When a person can show that he is fairly out of employment, that is, not through his own misconduct, he receives a ticket, which passes him from one lodge to another, the Odd Fellows, for instance. If a man is able, he will belong to two or more of these societies. I myself belong to two, and did belong to more, but some of them were broken up from distress. There was one which was broken up in consequence of the Act. The contributions were considered too high, and the allowances too low, and it was broken up. I got 3*l.* returned.

"10. Were many broken up from that cause?—Numbers in this and the surrounding neighbourhood; and this has given rise to the extension of secret orders. There is a deplorable circumstance to be mentioned with regard to the breaking up of these societies. The aged were thrown out, and had their pittance returned to them, and they were too old to be admitted to any other order or society.

"11. Are there many of these orders or societies?—There are 20, and perhaps approaching to 30; and this I think is evidence of the providence of the industrious population. I wish to mention, that the Sunday school children are generally in what is called a "funeral brief," which is a sort of burial society. At every death 1*d.* is contributed by each child, and 6*d.* or more, according to ability, by each teacher, which money goes to the parents of the deceased child.

"12. Are there any other orders having any peculiarity which it is worth while to mention?—There are female societies or orders. There is one of old standing connected with the parish church; they provide for sickness and death. The regular contribution is 1*s.* 6*d.* per quarter, and 6*d.* each in case of death. It consists of 170 members. During sickness 4*s.* a week is allowed, and accouchement 10*s.* a month. On the death of a person who has been 14 years a member, 4*l.* is allowed; they must contribute one year before they are entitled to any benefit; from one to seven years they have 1*l.* on death, and completing seven years 2*l.*"

Besides the cases mentioned above, of clubs being broken up in consequence of distress, many instances were stated to me of individuals being thrown out in consequence of their utter inability to meet the payment. The following is a distressing case of the kind, because the person, Benjamin Kirk, of Holbeck, was too old to re-enter at a favourable turn of employment:—

"4. What are you now weaving?—I have not been weaving of late, and have only earned 4*l.* since the 1st of March (that is up to the 15th of August), on one thing and another.

"5. What work have you had?—I have had a little haymaking." * * *

"10. Are you a member of a benefit society?—No; I was a member of a benefit society for 20 years, but being out of work, I was obliged to discontinue the payment, and I am beyond the age to get in again.

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"11. Are there many who get thrown out from a benefit society from a similar cause?—A very great many; there have been many thrown out."

Samuel Deane, of Bramley, gave evidence to the following effect:—

"5. Are you a member of a benefit society?—I am, and have been for 39 years; but from want of employment last year, I fell back three quarters, and as that excludes, I should have been thrown out but for a subscription raised by gentlemen in the neighbourhood to prevent it, by paying our subscriptions.

"6. Were there many in a similar state?—Yes, there were a great many."

The question, as to "the extent to which the weavers use the opportunities afforded them," is already answered. All the work that is at their disposal, they perform, and the difference between what they are *able* to earn, and what they actually *do* earn as a body, arises purely and solely out of the limitation of employment, compared with the number of hands to perform the work. There are doubtless among them some idle and dissolute men, as there are among all classes; but the only effect of this is, to give a little more employment to the diligent and larger class. Many instances were stated to me in evidence of men working fourteen and sixteen hours a day, as long as an abundance of work was flowing in.

Hitherto the weaver has been seen in his individual state, without reference to his family connexions, either depending on him in the way of support, or aiding the family income by their labour. It must be evident that, of all the circumstances affecting his condition, the proportion which the mere consumers in his family bear to the workers, is the most important.

The young weaver just out of his apprenticeship, is perhaps as well able to earn as he will be at any future period. Setting aside the domestic comforts incidental to the married state, his pecuniary condition is in the first instance improved by uniting himself with a woman capable of earning perhaps nearly as much as himself, and performing for him various offices involving an actual pecuniary saving. A married man with an income, the result of the earnings of himself and wife, of 20*s*., will enjoy more substantial comfort in every way than he alone would enjoy with an income of 15*s*. per week. This is alone an inducement to early marriage, an inducement which we shall hereafter see increased.

In obedience to this primary inducement, the weaver almost invariably marries soon after he is out of his apprenticeship. But the improvement of comfort which marriage brings is of short duration; at the end of the first year, the birth of a child deprives him of his wife's earnings, and at the same time adds to his expenses. During several years his condition is impaired by his increasing family, but he is sustained by the hope, that the labour of his children will in time become productive. There is scarcely any period of the weaver's life where his difficulties are so great as about the ninth or tenth year after his marriage, with a family of four, five, or six children, too young to labour; the care of the family occupies the whole of his wife's attention; she cannot possibly contribute a shilling to the income of the family, so that the whole must be fed by his hand alone.

In the evidence submitted to me, many cases of the kind were described; to cite them, however, is wholly unnecessary.

About the tenth year the labour of the eldest child becomes available; it is sent, perhaps, to some factory, and, as a "half-timer," will bring home from 1*s*. 6*d*. to 2*s*. a week; even if retained at home, there is a similar profit. A girl will perform many domestic offices, and so liberate the more productive labour of the mother: a boy will afford such aid to the father in winding the weft on bobbins, for the shuttle, or in such other little jobs, as will either save the hire of labour, or render the father's time more exclusively applicable to the loom, and therefore more productive. From this time forward, there is a yearly improvement; at the same time that a younger child becomes a "bobbin-winder," or a "half-timer," or a domestic helper to the mother, the eldest begins to learn to weave. At first the boy gets into his father's loom, when a light job happens to be in it, and weaves a bobbin; in a few months he is able to get into the loom, if tolerably light work be in it, whenever the father is called off. Soon the father thinks it worth while to obtain a second loom, and under his supervision, the son becomes a weaver. For some years this process goes on, and even if the weaver's family be increased by new births, the increasing productiveness of the labour of the elder children more than feeds the new mouths. This improving condition lasts perhaps for ten, twelve or fourteen years, and is at its maximum just so long as the

the eldest children abstain from marrying. Many cases of large families of workers occur in the course of the evidence, chiefly in the country villages.

Joseph Best, who estimated his own earnings at 14*s.*, stated the earnings of his two sons at 13*s.*, making 27*s.* for the gross income of the family.

James Stead, who stated his own earnings at 11*s.* 6*d.*, described the occupation and earnings of his children as follows:—

"They all work at Mr. Marshall's factory: I have a girl of 17, who earns 5*s.* 6*d.*; the second is a boy of 15, who earns 4*s.* 6*d.*; and the third is a girl of 13½, who earns 4*s.*" Thus making the income of the family, consisting of himself, his wife, and three children, 26*s.* per week.

James Whitaker, of Armley, gave evidence as to the earnings of his family as follows:—

"4. Have you a family?—I am a widower, with five children; my eldest is 19, and weaves in the same chamber as myself; he is as good a man as I am. The next is a daughter, but my house and the care of my family is enough for her; the next is a boy of 14, and he can earn 5*s.* a week, but for half the year, perhaps, he has not work for more than four day's a week; my next is a boy, he is 11; he works short-time with the other boy at Mr. Gott's, and when his schooling is paid, which is 2*d.*, he brings me 2*s.* 9*d.*; my youngest is 7, and goes to school; all my children can read, and all can write but the youngest." This would make the gross income of the family of five persons, when fully employed, about 32*s.*

Jonathan Grimshawe, of Calverley, gave the following testimony on the same point:—

"3. What kind of goods are you making now? Petershams of 40 porteths, 10 quarters, and 20 strings in length; we are paid 1*l.* for weaving and spinning a lump job."

"4. How long will it take you to weave, say two pieces?—I have three looms, and two jennies, and it will take us seven days to complete two pieces; that is, employing myself, my wife, and four children." This would make the income of the family about 34*s.* 6*d.* per week. But now as to the number depending on this little fund for subsistence.

"5. How many have you in family?—A wife, and eight children.

"6. How many work at home?—Four; none work from home."

The period of a weaver's maximum condition is, so long as one child becomes a worker for every one that marries off; not that the one gained, is equal to the one lost; but as all are becoming more skilful, as all are pushed one stage forward, the aggregate gain is about equal to the loss. When, however, all the younger children have become workers, and the loss of the son or daughter who marries, is not supplied, gradual deterioration commences, until at length the parents are left, with decaying physical powers, to their own unaided resources.*

Benjamin Kirk, a witness already quoted, is a strong case in point: I visited his house, among many others, at Holbeck, where I found his aged mother lying on a bed of sickness; he himself was a widower; all his children were grown up, and were doing for themselves; and even if he were fortunate enough to get full employment, his earnings would not exceed 10*s.* or 11*s.* to support two persons, with all the expenses of sickness. At the time I visited him he was out of work, but he got a warp a few days after, as described in his evidence."†

There is one important point connected with children which remains to be noticed; it is the taking of apprentices,‡ not regularly and formally indented, for that custom does not exist, but taking children to teach the business of weaving.

Every weaver who happens to possess two or three looms without children to occupy them, is in the habit of taking children to teach; and the terms on which this is done, affords a forcible illustration of the profitableness of children, affords proof, in short, that in a very short time the labour of a youth will yield more than the cost of his maintenance, a fact, be it observed, pregnant with important consequences,

* *See infra* the case of Peter Butterfield.

† It should be observed, that all the above statements indicate gross wages, subject to considerable deductions for unavoidable want of employment, sickness, &c.; besides which, such as are weavers, are liable to the expenses already fully stated.

‡ Instructions, § 7, p. 10.

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consequences, affecting the condition of the whole body of the weaving population. A few extracts from the evidence will serve to explain the conditions on which children are taken. The first extract is from the evidence of Benjamin Lee, a small manufacturer:—

"8. On what terms did you take your apprentice?—To find him food, raiment and lodging, and to teach him the trade; the time is for seven years I only agree to give him 1*s.* a year, which is the custom; but if he works hard and well, I make him a present.

"9. What time does he work?—From seven in the morning till eight at night, deducting about one hour and a quarter for meals.

"10. How much will he weave?—A string and a quarter a day, one day with another, and he does his work well. (This, at the medium price of 1*s.* 10*d.* per string, would make 12*s.* 6*d.* per week.)

"11. Is this practice general in Bramley?—No, there are very few on that principle. It is a custom with some to pay 5*s.* a week for the first year, and 7*s.* for the second, and so on, up to about 9*s.* or 10*s.*; but then they live with their parents. I feed and clothe my apprentice; he is nearly out of his time, and is a good workman.

"12. At what should you consider his cost to you?—I should think about 8*s.* a week."

Now, supposing Benjamin Lee, instead of taking his apprentice into his own house, had pursued the more common custom of paying wages to the parent, the following would have been the state of the account, according to the above data:—

	s.	*d.*	*s.*	*d.*
Earnings of the apprentice - - -	12	6		
Highest wages paid - - - - -	10	–		
Weekly profit to the master - - -			2	6
Cost of the lad's maintenance * - - -	8	–		
Weekly profit to the parent - - -			2	–

Isaiah Cawthray, of Yeadon, admits the existence of the custom, but doubts its profitableness, as far as his neighbourhood is concerned.

"12. Do the weavers take boys to teach?—They do. Boys are put out at trifling wages, for which the weaver teaches. The weaver, at first, pays the boy about 2*s.* a week, and advances the wages as he gets to learn the trade. I think there is but little advantage in it; I think the weaver hardly gets paid for his trouble."

Charles Fletcher, of Horsforth, stated the practice to exist in that neighbourhood.

"25. Do the weavers take children to teach?—There are several that do."

The evidence of George Kitchen, of Farsley, was to the same effect:—

"14. Is the work here man's work, or can boys do it?—It is chiefly man's work, but there is work that boys can do. There are individuals here in this town who get four or five looms, and set boys to work upon them, acting themselves as overlookers"—(a murmur of disapprobation at the practice ran through the room).

William Clough, of Pudsey, bore similar testimony:—

"36. Do the weavers of Pudsey generally take boys to teach weaving?—There are many who do.

"37. Is any premium charged?—No, none; on the contrary, they pay 5*s.* to the boy for his work.

"38. When does he begin to be useful?—If a strong boy, he will be useful in two or three months."

In short, in nearly every township I visited, evidence of the practice was given, the only exceptions being Armley and Guiseley, where it was stated to prevail to a small extent only.

So

* Over stated by 1*s.* 6*d.* or 2*s.*, making the parents' profit greater than in the text.

So long, however, as the double inducement of a profit to the parent and a profit to the master out of the child's labour remains, children will be taught to weave. In the case of the weaver's own children, the two inducements coalesce.

Much that has been already adduced will be found to bear upon the question of the moral condition of the weavers. The evidence already given as to the length of time they frequently labour when work is to be had, answered the question as to their diligence.* That they are not without providence, is shown by their extensive resort to benefit clubs: on this and other points, however, it is now necessary to enter rather more into detail. As far as I could ascertain by actual inquiry and observation, their modes of expenditure are economical. Generally speaking, their houses, whilst they bear vestiges of better days, have all the marks of frugal housewifery:—cleanliness, good order, and regularity. Their own appearance, and that of their children, on the Sunday, is creditable to them, and especially to their wives; and although I was for months amongst them,—although I have seen them under all possible circumstances, and have lost no opportunity of conversing with them, so as to inform myself on minute points not to be obtained in any other way, it remains to this moment a wonder to me how the weaver manages to keep his family in the creditable state he does on the small means at his disposal. Let any one endeavour to plan out the expenditure of 15 *s.* or 20 *s.*, or even of 25 *s.* per week on the support of from five to seven persons, and he will soon become convinced that there must be great and continually exerted frugality to avoid falling into the extreme of wretchedness in slack times. Idle, dissolute, and thoroughly worthless men there are among all classes; but I believe them to be extremely rare among the weavers of the West Riding of Yorkshire.

The attendance of the weavers at some place of worship is very general. Around Leeds the Wesleyan Methodists, Primitive Methodists, New Connexion Methodists, Independents, Baptists, and some other sects, have numerous chapels, which are usually filled. In the more remote townships one or more of the above sects have established themselves, in addition to the Episcopal Church or Chapel. New churches and chapels, also, are springing up in all directions. Attached to these will usually be found a school-house, where and in some cases a day-school is held. The Sunday-schools are usually under the management of a committee and superintendents; a great number of teachers, male and female, attend gratuitously, and give "elementary Scriptural instruction to the children." In all these schools reading is taught, and writing in some. The Wesleyans and Church clergy are opposed to the teaching of writing on Sunday; but in many cases they have a writing class on some other evening; these classes, however, are not well attended.

Most of the witnesses I examined on the subject testified to the desire of the weavers, that their children should obtain a common education; at the same time stating, that the desire was sometimes disappointed by the want of decent clothing for the children.

Mr. Henry Wilkinson, overlooker in the factory of Messrs. Ripley & Ogle, and superintendent and trustee of Zion School, gave evidence as follows:—

"6. Do the people of Holbeck and Wortley evince considerable desire to send their children to school?—They do.

"7. Are you aware of any circumstance preventing the sending their children to school?—Yes; want of clothing sometimes.

"8. But from the number of children at school in Wortley, that cause cannot be in very extensive operation?—No, not very. It arises from two causes; sometimes from want of employment, and at others, from neglect of purchasing when they have the means.

"9. But, generally speaking, the desire for education is strong?—It is both strong and general.

"10. Are there many day-schools?—There are a fair number; as many as get supported well.

"11. But, from the employment of children, they are not so well attended, I apprehend, as the Sunday-schools?—No, they are not. I have no idea of the number of scholars at day-schools.

"12. There

* Instructions, II. 3d, p. 12. † Ib.

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"12. There is a day-school at Zion School, is there not?—Yes, with about 250 scholars; it has reached 300. These figures, compared with 850, the number of Sunday scholars, may be taken as the proportion throughout the township. A payment is exacted at the day-school of 2 *d.* per week.

"13. Do you teach arithmetic at the Sunday-school?—No; we only teach writing as a matter of necessity. We should rather abstain from teaching writing, but we teach it because no other opportunity is afforded. There are some trustees and subscribers who object to it, on conscientious grounds. In the day-school they teach writing and arithmetic, and, in some cases, mechanics."

Joseph Lambert, schoolmaster at the church school, gave the following testimony:—

"7. Is there a considerable desire among parents to get their children educated?—There is. They have no chance to send them at any other time, and therefore the Sunday-schools do the most good.

"9. There is no difficulty, then, in getting scholars for schools?—None. We could get more if we could take them."

John Walker, one of the superintendents of the Sunday-school of the Primitive Methodists, gave similar evidence:—

"3. Is there a general disposition to send children to the Sunday-schools?—There is; there may be exceptions, but I think the desire is general.

"4. Have you any difficulty in getting children to attend the school?—Our school is full, and we are obliged to send some scholars to a room in an inconvenient place. Our difficulty arises chiefly out of the poverty of the inhabitants, who cannot afford to build more school-rooms. If we had convenient room, we could improve the morals of our children much more than we now do."

The following piece of evidence merits especial attention:—

"7. Has the increase of Sunday-schools much improved the appearance of the children?—I think it has. I sometimes think our children do not look like the same children as they used to do. When our children meet a teacher, they always seem pleased. We never use a stick. The necessity of sending children decent to school, makes the parents more careful of them. If the Government could do any thing in the way of an aid for building, it would be a great benefit."

In every part of the country the desire of the weavers to have their children taught the elements of knowledge is testified to; but here I am bound to state, that the desire is satisfied by sending the child to a Sunday-school; when the parent has done that, he thinks he has done his duty. Some there are, and perhaps not a few, who send their children to a day-school; some also there are, and these *are* a few, who neglect their children altogether, but these are the exceptions, the sending of children to the Sunday-school being the general rule. That attendance is confined to the Sunday-schools is not to be wondered at, when we consider that the child begins to work at an early age, so that time cannot be afforded for its education. It is true those children who work in factories are required to attend school, but in many cases this amounts to no more than sending them to a place called, by courtesy* I suppose, "the school-room," under the superintendence of a schoolmaster or mistress, who, for aught the mere obeyer of the law cares, may sign his or "her ⋈ mark."†

That the Sunday-school can never become a very efficient instrument of education must be obvious. Deducting the time of attendance at public worship, and the time required for relaxation after a week of labour, there is but a small balance of time available for the purpose of receiving instruction, which instruction, as we have seen, is, for the most part, limited by the religious opinions of the people, to reading and Scriptural instruction. As the Sunday-schools are carried on, the teachers cannot well be very competent; their zeal and persevering attention is beyond all praise; but in many instances they themselves have received no other education than that which the Sunday-schools afforded, at a time when Sunday-schools were not so good as they now are. When, however, we consider the thorough

* There are, however, some good factory schools. The Messrs. Marshals, of Leeds, have always led the way, and not lagged after the law, in promoting education. In the extensive worsted spinning establishment of Messrs. Hindes & Derham, where the comfort of the people is in every respect carefully attended to, and through whose mill it is a pleasure to go, there was a good school and a medical attendant *before* the law required it.

† In one instance I know this to have been the case; it may have been so in others.

thorough neglect of education by the Legislature and Government of this country, what has been done chiefly by the efforts of the people themselves, must excite our admiration. The disposition in favour of education has been generated; all it now requires is, to be fostered and directed.*

At Wortley there is an excellent Sunday-school, called "The Zion School," at which about 850 scholars are instructed. It is open to children of all religious persuasions; the children are as well taught as they can be in a few hours per week, and care is taken to improve their habits and manners. There is also a very good Day-schools held in the same building; it is carried on after the plan of the Borough-road school, and the managers are not slow to adopt suggested improvements. This school will serve as a model to others, and the good which is likely to spring from it in this way is incalculable. I visited both the Day and Sunday schools, and was particularly struck with their superiority compared with others I had seen. The children at the Sunday-school were exceedingly well dressed, and their marked cheerfulness showed that they were under teachers who had a real interest in their welfare. I was informed that the establishment of this school, accommodating, as it does, a large proportion of the children of the village, has had a very striking effect upon the appearance of the population. In order to send their children in a decent condition to the Sunday-school they make considerable sacrifices, greater sacrifices indeed than they were formerly in the habit of making; if this merely induced a taste for cleanliness in the children, it would be something; but it does more; the parents do not like to appear in a worse condition than their children, and they accordingly attend more to their own personal appearance. This begets industry, prevents wastefulness of expenditure, and tends continually to elevate the notions of the population as to what constitutes a decent subsistence. This is the very first condition of improvement. As long as the industrious classes are contented with the mere satisfaction of their physical wants, so long will they be in a degraded condition. To preach contentment to potato-fed people is to preach perpetual degradation. No people can be morally raised until they cease to be contented with a low condition, and I looked upon the remarkably neat appearance of the children at the Wortley school as a strong piece of evidence of the improving notions of the population as to the decencies of life.

Connected with the Zion School is the Youths' Guardian Society, instituted "to preseve youth from immorality and vice, and instruct them in useful knowledge." This society, like the Zion School, is "free from all sectarian or exclusive principles;" it is attended by most of the Sunday school teachers, a numerous body. "Lectures are given from time to time," and it enjoys the advantage of a useful and improving library of between 700 and 800 volumes.† Within a mile of the above society is another of a similar character, called the "Wortley Youths' Guardian Society," with a well-selected library, of about equal extent, and containing, in addition to a useful selection of history, voyages, travels and biography, a considerable number of works in series, such as the Family Library, the Edinburgh Cabinet Library, the books of the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge, Lardner's Cabinet Cyclopædia, and others.

At Armley, Bramley, and other places, there are also book societies; but generally on a smaller scale; and where there are not book societies so called, there will generally be found attached to some Sunday school a small collection of books; in some instances these are exclusively religious, in others, works in various branches of knowledge are added.‡

Mechanics'

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* As to the inefficiency of the Sunday-school as an instrument of education, see the remarks of the Reverend Mr. Bull, p. 42, *Note*.

† The following selection from the catalogue will give an idea of the useful character of the works: The Modern Traveller, 36 other books of Travels, 110 volumes of standard Historical Works, 70 volumes of works published by the Kildare Society, Constable's Miscellany, 70 volumes of Divinity, 33 volumes of works on Physical Science, 80 volumes of Biography.

‡ On the subject of factory and other schools in the West Riding, and on the state of education there, a valuable mass of evidence has been collected by Robert Baker, Esq., superintendent of factories, which, I believe, will be shortly before the public. Mr. Baker's exertions to improve the condition, both moral and physical, of those over whose welfare it is his office to watch, entitle him to great respect. I take this opportunity, moreover, of expressing my own obligations for the cheerful assistance he was at all times ready to render me in the fulfilment of my duties.

Yorkshire (West Riding.)

Report from *H.S. Chapman*, Esq.

Mechanics' institutions exist in various parts of the West Riding, but they are too expensive to be resorted to by the weavers to any extent. There exists in Leeds an institution which seems calculated to extend the advantages of mechanics' institutions; it is called "The West Riding Union of Mechanics' Institutes," and its objects and the expectations of its founders are thus expressed in the first report: "This plan (that of an union) appears to embrace two important objects: 1st. The interchange of opinion and advice on the local management of mechanics' institutions, and the consequent rapid diffusion of improved methods; and, 2d. The procuring of first-rate lecturers on scientific subjects, systematically arranged, and subordinated to each other, so as to present a connected and comprehensive view of each, *at a much lower pecuniary cost than can be done by isolated engagements.*"

The mechanics' institutions, which sent delegates to, or subsequently joined the union, are the following:—

Barnesley.	Keighley.	Ottley.
Bradford.	Leeds.	Ripon.
Dewsbury.	Pudsey.	Sheffield.
Halifax.	Todmorden.	York.
Huddersfield.	Yeadon.	

Of the above, the 10 first are weaving districts. As Pudsey contains the largest number of weavers in the district around Leeds, as it is "peculiarly a village of clothiers," a few particulars will show the small progress of mechanics' institutions among such a population.

The number of quarterly members in 1836 varied from 32 to 52; in 1837 the numbers fell off varying from 24 to 30. This, however, must be attributed to the distress of that year; for in 1838 the number rose to 52, besides 75 subscribers to the library of 371 volumes. When I asked the question, at the inquiry I held at Pudsey, as to the existence of a mechanics' institution in the town, a noisy dispute arose as to the mere fact, which was ultimately thus decided:—that there *had been* a mechanics' institution, with a library, but that it was now confined to the latter, the principal feature being in abeyance.

Yeadon, with a population of 2,761, with the very large proportion of 551 looms, showing that it is also "peculiarly a village of clothiers;" has a mechanics' institution; but it is not in a very flourishing state, having in April last only 42 members paying 6*s.* per annum each. In the larger towns the mechanics' institutions are flourishing; but they have the support of other classes; indeed it must be obvious they are not within the reach of a weaver's income.

Considering, then, the means of acquiring knowledge within the weaver's reach, no surprise can be felt when I state that, although the skilled weaver is necessarily well acquainted with the capabilities of the tool with which he works, his knowledge goes no further; not only is he not acquainted with the means of improving the implement he employs,* but he is slow to adopt improvements suggested by others.

Under the head of "moral condition," two points remain to be noticed, namely, "embezzlement" and "temperance."† Among the cloth weavers embezzlement has never existed to an extent worth noticing, and but for a point named by one of the witnesses, it might have been passed over with a simple negative. Abraham Worsnop, of Wortley, gave evidence on the subject as follows:—

"21. Are you aware of any embezzlement of the masters' property of late, as a practice, I mean?—I am not; but I know of one case, in which some bobbins were found in a master's garden; the individual who carried them into the garden confessed that he had done so because he could not get them all into the work; he would not steal them; his sense of right and wrong would not allow him, so that he took that method of getting rid of a quantity of weft, which he could not work in.‡

"22. Do

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* Instructions, p. 12.

† Ib.

‡ On the increase of wefting of late years, explanations will be presently given.

"22. Do you think the quantity was unreasonable?—I do; and this temptation to embezzlement is very great; for if a weaver takes back a score of bobbins, which he cannot get into the web, he may lose his employment, and not know where to get another job.

"23. Have you heard of cases of embezzlement from this cause?—I have heard of cases, but cannot say the cause. The master of the weaver who carried the bobbins into the garden, said, 'this is an honest man,' but he did not give him more work.

"24. Is embezzlement from any cause sufficiently common to be much complained of?—I do not think it is; I think the masters may easily detect it."

Indeed very few complaints have been made for a considerable number of years of embezzlement among the cloth weavers; it is among the worsted weavers chiefly * that the practice has been alleged to exist; hence it will be more carefully examined when I come to that branch of manufacture.

On the subject of temperance I will state my first impressions, and then proceed to the evidence I subsequently received. I arrived at Leeds direct from Manchester, where I had passed some days, for the purpose of taking advantage of Mr. Muggeridge's experience, before I proceeded to my own district. In passing through the streets of Manchester at night, intoxication, prostitution and disorder meet you at every step, and it is impossible to resist the impression, that a low state of morality prevails there. In Leeds, all is good order and tranquillity at night; the streets are singularly free from those disgusting exhibitions which are so common in other large towns. This favourable feature struck Mr. Keyser, as well as myself, and all the evidence that I have since collected, confirms and strengthens the impressions then made.

The evidence of John Walker, one of the committee of the school of the Primitive Methodists at Wortley, gave evidence to the following effect:—

"5. Do you think intemperance prevails much in your neighbourhood?—I think the neighbourhood is much improved of late in this respect.

"6. Are there any temperance societies in the place?—Yes; and they have done good. Many have been reclaimed; at least their wives say so."

Mr. George Padgett, a master clothier, bore testimony to the sobriety of the people of Guiseley:

"5. Is there much intemperance among the population?—There is not; we are all obliged, masters and men, to be very sober about here."

At Horsforth the following evidence on the point was offered. Joseph Whitaker was examined, as follows:—

"10. I wish to know if intemperance prevails much in this township among the weaving population?—It is more prevalent than it ought to be. (This, be it observed, might have been affirmed *universally*.)

"11. Is there any improvement in that respect?—I think there is improvement in that respect; but I fear the beer-shops are an encouragement to drinking in this neighbourhood." Upon this statement, Thomas Lawson came forward, and made the following remarks:—

"1. In reference to the last question, I wish to state that the last witness has not lived so long near a public-house as I have. I have lived 20 years near a public-house, and I think there is not so much drinking as there used to be before the beer-shops were begun.

"2. Do you think there is less drinking generally?—I do not think there is so much."

Mr. Samuel Bentley, a manufacturer of Rawden, gave the following evidence:—

"9. Are the weavers of Rawden tolerably temperate?—Yes, they are, taking them on the whole."

Mr. William Thompson, another manufacturer, was of the same opinion; he said, "There are individual cases of intemperance, but not affecting the whole body."

The

* I speak, of course, only as to the West Riding of Yorkshire.

Yorkshire (West Riding.)

Report from *H. S. Chapman*, Esq.

The evidence of William Kershawe, of Birstall, was to the following effect :—

"13. What are the habits of the people as to temperance?—I think there is room for improvement. I do not think intoxication is so great an evil as in some parts of Lancashire. The people will not deprive themselves of the necessaries of life for the sake of drink.

"14. Do you think within the last dozen years there is improvement in this respect?—I think there is."

At Farsley similar evidence was given by William Hollis. Individual cases are admitted to exist, but intemperance is denied to be general—

"37. Is there much intemperance?—There are some who will drink, even if their families are starving, but it is not a crying evil in the town. There are many places worse."

James Swithenbank, of Pudsey, bore testimony to the effect—

"23. Are the people of Pudsey generally temperate?—I think there is not much to complain of on that point.

"24. Is there any improvement going on in this respect in the habits of the weavers?—That must follow, from the lowness of wages; I do not think there is any from increase of education. There is great want of education."

Mr. John Pinkerton, a manufacturer of Morley, said, in speaking of the temperate habits of his own township, "It is generally admitted that Morley is as good as any town, both for temperance and attending public worship."

One witness only, George Hodgson, of Wortley, spoke decidedly unfavourably of the habits of the population in this respect—

"11. Does drunkenness much pravail?—Yes; although there are tea-total societies, and societies of all kinds, drunkenness prevails to a great extent.

"12. Especially among the weavers?—No, not more than among others; perhaps even less among them than among others."

As regards temperance, the habits of the people of the district under notice, are precisely similar to the state of the working classes of London, as described by Mr. Place, in his admirable evidence before the Committee of the House of Commons on drunkenness.* As a body, they are temperate, and a contrary habit is an immediate cause of separation into a distinct class. The whole character of the evidence I have quoted, if carefully read, proves this. Especial notice is taken by most of the witnesses of the existence of drunkards among the weavers. If the weavers were generally intemperate, the existence of drunkards among them would excite no such remark. Men of intemperate habits are mentioned as exceptions, not as making the rule. On this point, moreover, I shall not confine myself to the reporting of the testimony of others, but shall myself assume the character of a percipient witness. I lived for some months among the weavers, having every opportunity of observing and comparing, and among the strongest

* Extract from the Evidence of *F. Place*, Esq., before the Select Committee of the House of Commons on Drunkenness:—

"I can remember the time when in almost every printing-office there was a bottle of rum, and the workmen served themselves with it, and kept a score against themselves. I remember when almost every tailor's shop in London had a bottle of gin, and the man who kept the score for the publican was paid by having a glass out of a certain quantity. I know that now there is no such thing, and that there has not for many years been a rum-bottle in a printing-office, nor a gin bottle in a tailor's shop. I know that at one time it was the common practice for journeymen of different descriptions, as they went to their work, before six in the morning, to drink purl and gin; and it was the common practice for every workman to have a penny-worth of hot purl and a halfpenny-worth of gin before work, and this inevitably muddled them. There is no such thing now."

To this there is a note, containing an extract from the evidence of one of the witnesses before the Committee of 1830, on the sale of beer—John Vousley, a publican of Bermondsey: "I concur with the evidence given by the brewers and publicans, that the sale of strong beer has been declining for some years past;" and to account for this, he says, "only a few years ago there was not anything like what are called coffee-shops. I used to make a good deal of *purl*; I do not make any now; people's tastes are altered; they frequent coffee-shops."

Mr. Place is then examined as follows:—

"2039. Though the journeymen may be more temperate, do you not think women, and young boys and girls, are more in the habit of frequenting gin-shops than twenty years ago?—No, not generally. *I think the drunken part of the community has separated very much from the orderly part of the community, as the thieves have;* they now form a separate class of the community; they are now formed into classes by themselves." The whole of Mr. Place's evidence is worthy of attentive perusal.

strongest of the many impressions produced on my mind is, that the cloth weavers around Leeds are generally a very temperate body.*

Before bringing to a close what relates to the present condition of the cloth weavers, there are still a few points connected with the more distant villages which remain to be noticed. Generally speaking, the condition of the weaver, in a pecuniary point of view, is lower in the distant townships than in the immediate neighbourhood of Leeds; but this is in some measure counterbalanced by other advantages, such as the cheapness of farm and dairy produce.

In the distant townships, the scribbling and slubbing of the wool, as well as the scouring and fulling of the cloth after weaving, is done at mills, owned in shares by the small clothiers. These are called company mills, and will be found frequently alluded to in the evidence. The principle on which they are conducted is thus described in the testimony of Robert Holdsworth, a book-keeper in a company mill at Farsley:—

"Is it (the mill alluded to) a company mill?—Yes, it was built on shares. The price charged for slubbing is the regular price, and whatever profit there is, they divide.

"4. How are they managed?—By a committee of shareholders.

"5. What wages do the slubbers get?—They will earn 20*s.* to 24*s.*, and sometimes 25*s.*

"6. What do the children earn?—The pieceners, who work eight hours a-day, earn 2*s.* 6*d.*; children, twelve hours at the same employment, 3*s.* 6*d.* Fillers, those who put the wool into the scribbling machines, will earn 6*s.* They are generally the children of persons connected with the cloth trade (that is, of weavers, spinners, &c.)

"7. Is it long since company mills were established?—The first here was in 1831."

"8. Was that considered a benefit, as giving employment to children?—It was."

The finishing of the cloth is done at Leeds. It is sent to market in what is called the *balk* state, that is, as it comes from the fulling mill, or rather from the tenters, or drying-house.

At Guiseley, Abraham Moon, whom I ascertained to be a sober, steady and industrious workman,† thus described his earnings and mode of work:—

"2. What are you weaving?—Shawls.

"3. What are you paid?—1*s.* 6*d* per shawl for spinning and weaving. My wife and I do the whole. I can weave about two and a half shawls a day, and I work more than 11 hours.

"4. That makes 15 shawls a week: would that occupy a spinner and a weaver?—Yes, fully; the wages should be calculated at 9*d.* spinning, and 9*d.* weaving.‡

"5. What deductions are there from the above wages?—About 1*s.* 4*d.* for sizing, light, &c., and my loom cost me 6*l.*; and if I had to hire one, I should have to pay 1*s.* a week for it. I am about 32 years of age, and I think I am as able to work as any man. I never worked harder, and I consider the above as full earnings."

The above will be found to leave net 20*s.* a week for the earnings of two persons when fully employed, say 13*s.* to the man and 7*s.* to the woman.

The next extract is from the evidence of Isaiah Cawthray, of Yeadon:—

"8. Have you a statement there of your own earnings last year?—Yes, I have. It so happened that I was never out of work one day; and for spinning and weaving, my wife and I, she spinning and I weaving, earned 45*l.* 4*s.* 3½*d.*

I worked

* Among the Irish population of the town of Leeds, opium is used to a considerable extent; so also is it in Bradford. The stuff weavers of that part of Leeds called "the Bank," who are mostly Irish, use it to some extent; but when I asked some cloth weavers about it, they had scarcely heard of its use.

† This character was given me of him by his fellow workmen; I mentioned it afterwards to an employer, and it was confirmed.

‡ This is hardly fair, as the weaver is subject to deductions, and spinning is the lighter work. It should be *one-third*.—[*See* the extract from Isaiah Cawthray's evidence.]

Yorkshire (West Riding.)

Report from *H. S. Chapman*, Esq.

I worked upon an average 14 hours a day; and I do not stand two hours a day, as they do in factories, for meals. I reckon that my wife earns a third (15*l.* 1*s.* 5*d.*), and my wages will be 30*l.* 2*s.* 10*d.* There is a deduction from this for wear and tear of loom and jenny, 10*s.*; there is sizing and gearing 2*l.* 12*s.*; loom-stand and light 2*l.* This reduces my own weaving wages to 25*l.*, or under 10*s.* a week net, and that for full work and long hours."

The method generally practised in the more distant villages, is to take out the work in *slubbing*, and one man will spin for two looms. The division is into thirds, the deductions falling on the weavers. The evidence of William Rycroft, of Rawden, will explain this, as well as testify to the earnings,—

"1. Are you weaving now?—I am taking out work in slubbing, like the other witnesses.

"2. What kind of work have you now in hand?—Cloth of 66 porteths, and I am paid 2*s.*; it is a different kind of cloth to the others.

"3. What time will the cloth take?—The "cloth"* of 42 strings will take a fortnight, working long hours. In winter it would take three weeks.

"4. What deductions are there from that?—About 10*s.* in summer, and 18*s.* in winter.

"5. Who works with you?—Journeymen; I pay them.

"6. Are the looms your own?—Yes.

"7. Then the deductions you state are in part paid to you?—Yes, the hire of the looms. The general way is, to divide the price into three parts, and the weaver pays so much for the looms, 1*s.* per week."

It would be tedious to go further into particulars, the more especially as the following extracts from the evidence of the various witnesses named, will show that gross wages are less than around Leeds.

Place.	Name.	Gross Wages.	Net Wages.
		s. *d.*	*s.* *d.*
Guiseley	J. Hewitt, aged 74	8 –	6 –
	John Bailey, about 60	10 10	8 10
	J. Holmes	10 6	8 6
	Timothy Waite, 42	11 2½	9 2½
	A. Moon, 32	13 –	11 –
Yeadon	Benjamin Franklin	9 –	7 –
	Isaiah Cawthray, 30	12 –	10 –
Horsforth	Charles Fletcher, 34	14 6	12 6
	Joseph Whitaker	12 –	10 –
Rawden	Jonas Whiteacre, 55	14 –	12 –
	Thomas Dennison	15 –	13 –
	W. Ryecroft	14 –	12 –
	Richard Hardacre	13 6	11 6
Birstall	George Hopkinson	14 –	12 –
	Thomas Holmes, 34	12 –	10 –
	Joshua Hopkinson	11 6	9 6
	James Goodair	9 6	7 6
	Stephen Allot	14 –	12 –
Pudsey	William Clough, 55	10 –	8 –
	Ditto	12 –	10 –
	Ditto, highest	15 –	13 –
	J. Swithenbank	10 –	8 –
Morley	W. Butterfield, about 50	15 –	13 –
	W. Page	12 –	10 –
Gildersome	Mark Dixon	11 6	9 6

These are all I can conveniently separate from the earnings of families. They will serve to show, that wages are considerably lower in the villages at a distance from Leeds, than they are in the immediate neighbourhood. The best work is done and the highest wages paid in Leeds; this, as already stated, draws the most skilful hands, whilst, on the other hand, the pleasantness of a country residence, and some substantial advantages attached thereto, in some degree counterbalance the better wages of the town. As to the wages in the country villages, I must observe, that my evidence is not so trustworthy as in and near the borough of Leeds. In Leeds I had ample opportunities of learning the character of my witnesses,

* The "cloth" is a double piece, the ordinary piece, which is half a cloth, being usually called an "end."

nesses, and of correcting or confirming their evidence, whilst in the country villages I had no such opportunity, at least to no great extent; still as the average is only 3*s.* below the average of the wages of the borough, I am not inclined to doubt the general accuracy of the statements, the more especially as much of the work is of the lighter kinds, and therefore easily woven by boys and young women.

The deductions to which the weaver in the country is liable, are heavier than within the borough of Leeds. In the latter place it is customary, as stated by Joseph Best, to make an allowance to the weaver for sizing, whilst in the country villages no such allowance is made. In some cases the cloth-maker who takes the work out in slubbing, is required to pick the wool. Under all circumstances a deduction of 2*s.* per week for unavoidable expenses, is the least that can be allowed; in some cases it was estimated at 2*s.* 4*d.* per week.*

There is one exception to the above general statement; it is, that in Calverley and Farsley (which united form one chapelry), wages are as high as in Leeds, and work much more constant. Whilst families are earning (as we have seen) between 30*s.* and 40*s.*, they have been but little liable to want of employment.

William Hollis stated, that "there was a want of work in 1837, *but it was not so bad as elsewhere*; I should think the wages of last year would be below the average." The fact is not difficult to account for; the goods made in Farsley, are chiefly such as are called "Petershams," a kind of thick coating, which has been for some years in very general use in London and elsewhere for winter clothing. Independently of the great fluctuations of foreign trade, and looking to a home demand, varying only with the change of season, the amount of that demand can be at all times estimated; and although the goods are calculated only for winter use, the manufacturer, or, more properly speaking, the Leeds cloth merchant, does not hesitate to permit his stocks to accumulate during the summer, secure of a returning demand at the usual season. This steadiness of trade has had its effect, even on the physical appearance of the people. The men are better built, and of larger frame, and the women generally better looking, than in most of the neighbouring townships. The township of Pudsey, which joins Farsley at Stanningley,† has been subject to severe distress, and generally to wages rather lower than the average, and the people are not only physically inferior, but are coarse in their manners, and certainly below most of the neighbouring townships in intelligence: hence the superiority of Farsley is more striking. It is also worthy of remark, that while the population of Pudsey has increased, no less than 20 per cent. (from 6,229 to 7,460) in the ten years ending 1831, that of Calverley-cum-Farsley has been almost at a stand, the numbers being in 1821, 2,605; in 1831, 2,637. Good wages and physical and moral superiority will generally be found to co-exist; they are perpetually re-acting upon one another. The same may be said of low wages, recklessness and physical inferiority.

It will be seen hereafter, that the wages of the worsted weavers are considerably below those of the cloth weavers; whilst those of the cotton weavers are greatly below the first named. A worsted weaver will generally earn half as much again as a cotton weaver, whilst a cloth weaver will earn as much as both together.‡

The township of Shipley is the westernmost locality of the Leeds clothing district; it runs like a tongue into the worsted district; besides which, many worsted weavers reside therein. In like manner, the worsted district blends with the cotton district at Steeton, Silsden and Addingham; a consequence of this is, that there is a similar blending of wages. The cloth weavers of Shipley work for wages but little, if any thing, higher than those of the worsted weavers; whilst the worsted weavers north-west of Keighley are reduced down to the cotton standard.

At

* It is necessary here to repeat the caution given in the case of the earnings of the weavers of the borough of Leeds. The statements are in all cases of the week's earnings when fully employed, without allowance for sickness, relaxation, or slack times.

† Stanningley is a considerable clothing village on the road between Bradford and Leeds; it stands on the three townships of Pudsey, Bramley and Farsley.

‡ A very skilful cotton weaver, at the very best work, will earn 9*s.*; it will require a first-rate hand at the best kind of stuff-weaving to earn 13*s.* 6*d.*, whilst there are cloth weavers who on good work will, as we have seen, exceed 1*l.* 2*s.* 6*d.*; but all these are rare instances, and suppose full employment: 6*s.*, 9*s.*, and 15*s.*, would represent ordinary cases, the proportion being the same. But cloth weaving is *man's work*; women and children compete with men in the stuff and cotton trade.—[*N. B.* Since this was in type, Mr. Nussey, of Birstall, a respectable and intelligent manufacturer, in the course of a conversation I had with him, made use of the same expression, "cloth weaving is *man's work*," when accounting for the superiority of cloth weavers' earnings compared with those of stuff and cotton weavers'.]

Yorkshire (West Riding.)

Report from *H. S. Chapman*, Esq.

At Idle, where I held a public inquiry for the townships of Idle, Shipley, Eccleshill and Bolton, a written statement was handed in, complaining of the existence of the truck system, at a small hamlet called Windhill, in the first-named township. It is a fact worthy of notice, that I was begged not to ask questions on the point, as any testimony on the part of a weaver who had suffered from the custom, would have been followed by loss of employment: I was, however, assured, by many persons, both employers and weavers, that the allegation was correct. This shows how completely impotent is the law, howsoever stringent it may be, where both employer and employed will consent to violate it. The employed is compelled to submit: the constantly overstocked state of the labour market places him at the mercy of the master, and the same condition prevents him taking a single step to expose the fraud to which he is subjected.

At Churwell, south of Leeds, another form of truck was exhibited to me, as existing at Mill Shaw, in the township of Beeston, where there is a factory employing between 20 and 30 hand-loom weavers: it is the practice of the owners of this factory to oblige their weavers to take part of their hard earnings in cloth, in some cases less than half being paid in money. A bill of parcels was handed to me in proof of the allegation it runs as follows:—

"A. B.* Mill Shaw, August 1838.

Bought of *John Walker* & Sons

August 1838, 1¼ superfine black cloth, at 11/6 - - £. - 14 4½,"

Another most disgraceful practice to which the necessities of the weavers render them a prey, is that of dropping a few threads in the porteth, so as to defraud in the set or count.

It is the general custom for the price of weaving to advance 1*d.* per string by every two porteths; thus if 76 porteths be paid 2*s.* 2*d.*, 78 will be 2*s.* 3*d.*, and so on. Some houses advance 2*d.* for every four porteths, thus 76 at 2*s.* 2*d.*; 80, 2*s.* 4*d.*; 84, 2*s.* 6*d.* The porteth, be it remembered, is 38 threads, or yarns of warp, and the practice alluded to is to make the warp two or three threads short of one set, so as to make it count 1*d.* or 2*d.* per string lower. From the small number of these complaints which reached me, however, I am induced to believe that the cases are rare: some instances there are of masters who are perpetually striving to depress wages; some will always be the lowest† in the market; but those who resort

* I have suppressed the name, and altered the date, so as to protect the poor weaver who gave it to me; indeed I tore off his name in his presence.

† The following Table, published in the Leeds Mercury, at the time of the turn-out in 1831, will show the difference of wages paid by the principal superfine cloth manufacturers in Leeds. It will be seen that Messrs. Gott & Sons were considerably lower than their fellow-manufacturers; Messrs. Hirst, Bramley & Co., and Messrs. Ripley & Ogle, then, as now, standing highest:—

Set Porteths.	Gott & Sons.	Haliley & Co.	P. Willans.	Hirst & Bramley.	Ripley & Ogle.	Proposed by the Weavers.
	s. *d.*	*s.* *d.*	*s.* *d.*	*s.* *d.*	*s.* *d.*	*s.* *d.*
70	1 7	- - -	2 -	1 10	1 10	2 -
72	1 8	1 11	- - -	2 -	- - -	2 1
74	1 9	- - -	2 2	2 2	2 1	2 2
76	1 10	2 -	- - -	- - -	- - -	2 3
78	1 11	2 1	2 5	2 4	- - -	2 4
79	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	2 4	
80	2 -	2 3	- - -	2 6	- - -	2 5
82	2 1	- - -	- - -	- - -	2 6	2 6
84	2 2	2 4	2 7	2 7	- - -	2 7
86	2 4	2 6	- - -	- - -	- - -	2 8
88	2 6	- - -	2 9	2 8	2 8	2 9
90	2 7	- - -	- - -	- - -	2 10	2 10
91	- - -	2 9				
92	2 8	- - -	- - -	2 10	2 11	2 11
94	2 9	- - -	3 -	- - -	- - -	3 -
95	3 -	- - -	- - -	3 -		
96	- - -	3 -	- - -	3 3		
98	3 1	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	3 1
100	3 2	3 3	- - -	- - -	- - -	3 2
102	3 3	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	3 3
103	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	3 6	
104	3 4	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	3 4

resort to indirect or dishonest means of obtaining that end, are happily few in number. Whenever I asked the question as to the terms on which the employers and employed stood in relation to each other, the answers were, either that the men had nothing to complain of on that score, or that they were on tolerable terms, or words to that effect. Nothing more need be said respecting the present condition of the weavers of the district under notice. I pass, therefore, to their past condition.

As far back as the memory of the present race of manufacturers and weavers extends, there is not much difficulty in obtaining evidence as to the prices paid for weaving, and comparative quantity of labour necessary to weave a given set at former periods, and at present. To this extent the memory of the present race may be trusted; but when we go back to the last century, evidence becomes more scanty. The wages-book kept by a manufacturer, is a temporary book, which, where the totals are transferred to his ledger, becomes only useless lumber, and after a time is destroyed. Besides this, the ordinary casualties of trade leave but few houses of half a century's standing: such evidence, however, as I have been able to collect to the past condition of the weaver, I proceed at once to digest.*

If we were to take the mere rate of wages per string from 1800 to the present time, without taking into consideration the alteration in the character of the work, our conclusion would be most erroneous; and the following evidence will show conclusively, that while wages have continued nearly stationary, or have declined only in a trifling degree, the increased quantity of labour entailed on the weaver by the general improvement of the Yorkshire cloths, has been equivalent to a reduction of wages. On this point, Joseph Best gave evidence as follows:—

"34. As your own experience extends over a long period, can you state whether wages have declined within your experience?—It is a difficult question, because the work has altered. I consider wages have declined at least 30 per cent. by the alteration of the work, and more than 15 per cent. in money, compared with 22 years ago. I am now 42 years of age, and I consider it takes me six days to earn as much as I got in three days when I was twenty years old.

"35. Are you as able a man as at 20?—I consider I am quite so. I am sensible of no failing.

"36. Will you state how the work has altered?—In about 1816 or 1817 the work we then wrought as 80 porteths, for which we then had 2*s.* 6*d.* per string, had 2lbs. 4oz. of weft per string (18 skeins of weft to the wartern of 6 lbs.), and that was considered good cloth. I am now required to work in the same set 3 lbs. 12 oz. of weft per string (25 skeins to the wartern of 6 lbs.), and this requires as much more labour, on account of the greater weight and fineness of the weft."

The above data reduced to length will give an increase of wefting from 10,260 to 23,750 yards of weft per string. James Stead's evidence explains the increase of wefting with rather more clearness, at the same time confirming, in every way, the statement of the former witness—

"21. Can you state, from your own experience, whether there has been any decline in wages within the last 30 years?—It is now 30 years since I was out of my apprenticeship. I have said that a 70 porteth was the last work I wove. At that day I had 2 *s.* a string for that kind of work, but the warps ran only to 20 skeins in the wartern of 6 lbs., and the wefts to 16 skeins, the length of the skein being 1,520 yards, and the weight of weft we then had to put in the string was 2 lbs. 1 oz., or 2 lbs. 2 oz. Now the warp runs to 24 skeins, or 25 skeins, in the wartern of 6 lbs. (that is finer spun), and the weft is increased to 23 skeins. We have also to put into the string from 3 lbs. 4 oz. to 3 lbs. 8 oz., and our labour is proportionally increased.

"22. What time would it then take you to weave a piece of cloth such as was then made?—I could weave that cloth in eight days, and now it would take as good a man as I was then, 18 days to weave a piece of the cloth now made. The difference in the length of the weft that has to run through the eye of the shuttle will prove this statement."

Let

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* Messrs. Benj. Gott & Sons have it in their power to furnish such information; but they exhibited great reluctance to promote the objects of the inquiry in any way.

Yorkshire (West Riding.)

Report from *H. S. Chapman*, Esq.

Let us try James Stead's statement by the proposed test.* It will be found that 2 lbs. 2 oz. of weft of 16 skeins will contain 8,614 yards, whilst 3 lbs. 8 oz. of 23 skeins will contain 18,936 yards. Assuming that the former would take eight days, the latter will require rather more than 17 ½ days; that is, taking the mere Rule-of-Three calculation, without inquiring whether the yarn of 1838 makes better or worse work than that of 1808. The introduction of the practice of increased wefting is thus described by the same witness:—

"30. It arose, I think, from Mr. William Hirst requiring continually more and more weft, so as continually to get his cloth wove in a superior manner to any other manufacturer, by giving premiums to weavers besides their wages, to induce them to exert themselves, and get as much weft into the cloth as possible.

"31. When did Mr. Hirst give these premiums?—Sixteen or eighteen years since.

"32. Did others follow his example?—No.

"33. How did these premiums depress the condition of the weaver?—As soon as Mr. Hirst found out what the weaver could do by hard wefting, then the premiums fell off, and the increased work remained. The consequence was, other manufacturers followed the example, by degrees adding two ounces now and two ounces then; and they have been adding up almost to the present day."

James Cromack, of Armley, gave evidence of a similar tenor, and accompanied it with the following Table, to show its effects upon wages:—

Years.	Weight of Weft per String.	Number of Skeins per String.	Number of Yards of Weft per String.	Price paid for Weaving per String.	Average Weekly Earnings.
	lbs. oz.			*s. d.*	*s.*
1817 to 1822 -	2 12	8	12,540	1 10	24/
1822 to 1827 -	3 –	9 ½	14,440	2 –	20/
1827 to 1832 -	3 4	12	18,240	2 –	15/
1832 to 1837 -	3 8	15	22,800	2 1	9/

The following is an abstract of a statement of the weight of weft in cloth of 70 porteths, from 1800 to 1837, furnished by Messrs. Benj Gott & Sons:—

Years.	Skeins to the Wartern.	Weight of Weft per String.	Yards of Weft.
		lbs. oz.	
1800 to 1816 -	22	2 7	13,585
1817 to 1824 -	22	2 12	15,226
1825 - - -	22	3 –	16,723
1826 to 1829 -	21	3 2	16,625
1830 to 1837 -	22	3 4	18,114

Some allowance must be made for the greater evenness of the yarn by the improved spinning of the present day. This the weavers are not disposed to admit; but an examination of yarn spun by the mule side by side with that spun by the jenny, will show that the former is superior; making all allowances, however, it is still evident, that during the early part of this century up to about 1816, the weavers' earnings in money were, at least, 50 per cent. better than they are now. According to their own statements, the difference is 100 per cent., that is double.†

Antecedent to the experience of the witnesses whose evidence I had the opportunity of obtaining, all that I have been able to meet with are a few scattered notices‡ here and there in several published works of character and authority.

In the year 1800 Mr. Benjamin Gott, of Leeds, stated before Parliament, that men in the woollen trade earned 16 *s.* to 18 *s.* per week; children 3 *s.* per week; older children 5 *s.* to 6 *s.*; women 5 *s.* to 6 *s.*; older men 9 *s.* to 10 *s.* Mr. Gott being

* As 8,614 yards : 8 days :: 18,936 yards : 17·58 days.

† Let it be borne in mind, that, following the witnesses, we are speaking of money-wages, real wages, that is, the articles of consumption which money wages will purchase, will be presently stated.

‡ These notices were collected and forwarded to me by Mr. Thomas Plint, an intelligent manufacturer and cloth merchant of Leeds.

being a manufacturer, would not understate the earnings of his people; and as his house has always made the best goods in the market, and, consequently, had the best hands, the above may be considered as the best wages of that day. Messrs. Gott & Sons now weave by power, but they still retain about 20 hand-loom weavers, who did not turn out in 1831, when their men struck for 10 months. Of these 20 men, the present earnings will be about the rate named by Mr. Gott in 1800.*

It is stated in Sir Morton Eden's work on the poor,† that in 1797 the earnings of cloth-weavers at Leeds ranged from 12 *s.* to 18 *s.* per week.

Arthur Young, in his Annals of Agriculture, has many statements respecting the earnings of weavers in various parts of the country. The following relates to Leeds in the year 1796:—

"Leeds has six or seven steam-engines for mills" (scribbling-mills and gig-mills doubtless are here meant), "and a dyeing-house has one.

"Spinners earn 10 *d.* to 1 *s.* per day.

"Croppers, shearmen, &c. 21 *s.* to 30 *s.* per week.

"Weavers in cottages 12 *s.* per week (some); none so low as 9 *s.*"

This account is given by Arthur Young, from personal observation; and he adds a note to the effect that "the machines which have done so much for the cotton trade are fast introducing here."‡

It thus appears, that the comparatively high wages recollected by most of the witnesses examined by me, form a sort of episode in the history of weaving. In 1800 money wages were about what they are in 1838; previous to 1800 they were, if any thing, rather lower§ I cannot find the year that the advance commenced, but it was subsequent to 1800, and it lasted only until 1815 or 1816, and, in all probability, the period of comparatively high wages did not exceed a dozen years.

But before we can feel ourselves in a condition to pronounce upon the actual condition of the weaver for the short period of better money wages, to which he naturally looks back with so much regret, it will be necessary to ascertain the command over the necessaries of life which such money wages gave him. Here, it may be observed, in general terms, that the period marked out as that of better wages, was also that of a depreciated currency. In 1801 paper money ceased to be upon a par with the previous metals: from 1802 to 1809 the average depreciation was about 3 per cent.; but from 1810 to 1816, the period at which wages were at the maximum, the range of depreciation was from 15 to 26 per cent. In 1817, the year in which wages are stated to have declined, the currency was considerably restored, the depreciation being only 2½ per cent.; and in 1821 the currency was again at par. But a depreciated currency was not the only cause of enhanced prices; we had, at the same time, a series of deficient harvests, and, in so far as the war operated, it was to increase the demand for provisions, or impede the supply, by enhancing the cost of transport of all sea-borne articles. The effects of all these concurrent causes will be best explained by the following tables. The first is,

A STATEMENT of the PRICES of various Articles of FOOD and HOUSEHOLD STORES for the use of GREENWICH HOSPITAL, from 1800 to 1835.

Year.	Flesh per cwt.	Flour per sack.	Butter per lb.	Cheese per lb.	Oatmeal per bushel.	Salt per bushel.	Beer per barrel.	Candles per doz. lbs.
	s. d.	*s. d.*	*s. d.*	*d.*	*s. d.*	*s. d.*	*s. d.*	*s. d*
1800 -	64/4	96/	–/11 1/8	6 1/4	14/	–	–	–
1810 -	72/6	88/4	1/1 3/8	8 1/8	11/7	–	–	–
1815 -	68/	44/9	1/2	8	10/3	19/9	15/4 3/4	11/7
1820 -	70/4 1/2	55/1	–/9 1/2	7	13/4	19/9	15/10 1/2	8/2 3/4
1825 -	59/6 1/2	53/4	–/10 1/2	5 1/4	17/6	2/10	16/6 1/4	6/
1830 -	43/6	54/11	–/6 1/2	6 1/2	16/11	1/8	12/6 1/2	5/3 1/2
1835 -	40/7 1/2	31/– 3/4	–/7 1/2	4	14/6	1/3	13/9 1/2	5/2

The

* The statements as to the earnings of children, women and old men, would do for the present time.

† Vol. 3, p. 849. ‡ Annals of Agriculture, vol. 27, p. 310, A. D. 1796.

§ In 1719 there was a period of great distress, so much so, that riots broke out in various parts of England. A controversy arose on the subject as to the "distresses of the poor weavers."—Smith's Memoirs of Wool.

Yorkshire (West Riding.)

Report from *H. S. Chapman*, Esq.

The following is a Table of the average price of Wheat, at intervals of five years, from 1790 to the present time, together with the contract price paid "per ration" at Chelsea Hospital for the supply of the inmates.

Year	Price of Wheat per quarter.	Price paid per Ration for the Chelsea Pensioners.
	s. d.	*s. d.*
1790 -	56/3	–
1795 -	74/2	–
1800 -	113/7	–/8
1805 -	87/10	–/11
1810 -	106/2	1/–
1815 -	64/4	1/–
1820 -	6510	–/11 ¾
1825 -	66/6	–/8 ¾
1830 -	64/3	–/7 ⅝
1835 -	39/4	–
1837 -	54/2	–

Average of Ten Years, ending	* Average Prices of Beef and Mutton, per lb.
	d.
1800 -	5 ⅛
1810 -	7 ½
1820 -	8
1830 -	5 ½
Seven years ending 1837 -	5 ¼

Price in 1814 - - - 9 ½ *d.*

Range of prices from 1811 to 1815 - 8 ¼ *d.* to 9 ½ *d.*

It thus appears, that as far as regards food and stores, there has been no period within the range of our inquiries at which money would go so far as within the last few years, taking any or all of the data in the above Tables. The average price of wheat during the last ten years has been but little over 55*s.*; from 1800 to 1815, with a price of wheat generally above 80*s.*, and not unfrequently exceeding 100*s.*, and for a time reaching 125*s.*, every article (excepting oatmeal and beer), it will be seen, was extravagantly high.† In most cases they were 50 per cent. above present prices, and in some more than double. Assuming a good and steady workman to be now able to earn 13*s.* 6*d.* only, after all deductions, he could purchase as much wheat as 31*s.* 3*d.* would purchase in 1813. This, however, is an extreme case; nevertheless, his command over the necessaries of life must be at least 50 per cent., and probably not far short of 75 per cent. greater than such a sum would have afforded him in 1815.

The prices of the whole "ration" allowed at Chelsea Hospital may also be cited as a tolerably fair criterion of the difference in the value or buying capacity of money. These "rations" consist of bread, meat, potatoes, cheese, and some other articles, sufficient for the keep of one man for a day. They have been rather improved of late years, both in quantity and quality, and yet it took 50 per cent. more money to purchase "a ration" in 1815 than it did in 1830.

In the above statements clothing has not been considered, but in the portion of wages expended therein, the improved value of money is very much greater. The introduction and increased cheapness of the cotton manufacture especially has placed cleanliness and decency within the reach of every member of the industrious man's family; and there is not a single article worn by the working man or his children which is not reduced enormously in price within the last 25 or 30 years.

Making allowance, however, for the difference in the value of money, there still remains an uncompensated difference between the wages of 1815 and those of the present day; but inasmuch as wages prior to 1800 were certainly not higher, and were, as it seems, rather lower, the condition of the cloth weaver in 1838 must be better than in 1808, or before, by all the difference in the purchasing power of money-wages.

I will now proceed to describe the condition of the worsted weavers around Bradford,‡ postponing all considerations touching causes and remedies until we have

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* From Driver's Tables for Land Surveyors.

† The Tables do not exhibit the prices of the "dear year," as 1813 was called, when wheat was 125*s.*, butter 15*d.*, and every article in proportion.

‡ There are a few stuff weavers in Leeds (about 725); but I abstain from touching upon their condition until I have described that of the great body.

Yorkshire (West Riding.)

Report from *H. S. Chapman*, Esq.

have the means of comparing the condition of the two classes of weavers together, and of considering the "last and most important"* subject of the inquiry, namely, "whether there are any, and what, remedies for the distress," in reference to both classes, at the same time.

The principal kinds of stuffs made in the villages around Bradford are $^6/_4$ shalloons or double twills, called in the shops, when finished, French merinos; $^6/_4$ plainbacks on common merinos, which are twilled on one side only; $^6/_4$ wildbores, or plain stuffs; $^3/_4$ wild-bores, figured stuffs, moreens.

In the worsted manufacture the business of spinning is more completely separated from that of manufacturing than in the case of the woollen manufacture. Though in some few cases houses will be found who are both spinners and manufacturers, it generally happens that the worsted spinner sells, and the stuff-manufacturer buys, the yarn in the market.

The wool intended to be spun into worsted is more completely washed than is necessary in the case of the wool designed for the scribbling mill. In the latter case the fleece is often clean enough for the dyer; in the former case two careful washings are necessary.

The process of combing is performed both by the hand and by machinery, and the object, as already stated, is to straighten the fibres of the wool, and lay them even. The finer qualities of wool—always, be it observed, of shorter fibre than the coarser kinds—are combed by hand, whilst the coarser long-stapled sorts are not unfrequently, though not invariably, combed by a machine.

In both cases heat is necessary, and the hand-combs are heated at a charcoal-brazier. Two combs are in use, others at the same time undergoing the heating process to be ready as those in use cool; one comb being fixed against the wall at a convenient height, and in a convenient situation as to light, by the insertion of its handle in a socket, its teeth being uppermost; it is then charged with wool by the hand of the comber, and carefully combed with the heated comb, the teeth of which are of course pointed downwards. When this is done, the wool is pulled off the comb by the hand, coming off in a long *sliver*, as it is called, in which state it is ready for the drawing frames.

Combing by machinery is performed by a pair of large revolving wheels, the outer circumference of which is armed with teeth formed like those of the hand-comb, and the axle and frame-work made hollow, so as to be capable of being kept at the required temperature by means of steam. These wheels are made to revolve in opposite directions at an angle of 27 degrees, and as the teeth also point in opposite directions, the wool is combed from one to the other: after combing, the *sliver* is taken off through a roller by a boy.

The process of the drawing-frames is to elongate, and, further lay even the fibres of the wool previous to spinning. For this purpose the slivers are placed in tin cans; five or seven of them are united, and drawn out to the thickness, or less than the thickness, of one. It follows, that each length (if five be united) will contain one-fifth part of each original sliver; and if the process of elongation be five times repeated, the roving before it goes to the spinning throstle will contain portions of 3,125 slivers. The result is evenness and strength; for the chance of two ends of fibres occurring in one place is very small; that three ends should occur at one place, is next to impossible. A brick wall will afford a rude, but obvious illustration of the effect of this process: the bricks are made to overlap; no two ends are permitted to coincide; were the ends of several rows to coincide, the wall would be levelled by the first breeze.

Worsted spinning is performed not by the mule, but by the throstle, a machine by which the rovings are elongated, by being passed between rollers, and are then twisted into yarn, and wound around cops or bobbins. After being thus spun, the bobbins are taken to the reelers, and are reeled off into hanks of 560 yards. They are afterwards made up into packets, containing a dozen gross of hanks; and such as are to be sent to a distance, are packed in bales.

The

* Instructions, p. 25.

Yorkshire (West Riding.)

Report from *H. S. Chapman*, Esq.

The wages earned * by the several persons employed in the extensive and well-regulated spinning establishment of Messrs. Hindes & Derham, during one week, were as follows :—

	£.	s.	d.		£.	s.	d.
Wool-sorters	1	6	3½	to	1	10	–
Overlooker	–	–	–		1	10	–
Combers, by hand	–	14	9	to	1	6	6
Overlooker, 28 *s.*, with a house worth 5 *s.*	–	–	–	=	1	13	–
By machine (boys)	–	4	–	to	–	10	–
Overlooker	–	–	–		1	4	–
Washers (paid by the week, not by the job)	–	–	–		–	18	–
Preparers (at the drawing frames), girls	–	6	6	to	–	7	–
Spinners, girls under 13	–	1	6	to	–	2	–
„ over 13	–	3	–	to	–	6	–
Overlookers in both departments	–	18	–	to	1	1	–
Reelers, girls and women	–	8	5	to	–	13	9
Bunchers, who make up the hanks into packets, girls and women	–	7	6	to	–	8	–
Men (who are overlookers)	–	18	–	to	1	4	–
Packers, men	–	–	–		–	18	–
Engine man	–	–	–		1	4	–
Fireman	–	–	–		–	16	–

The worsted weaving district, of which Bradford is the market, comprises the following villages and townships :—

Name of Township or Village.	Distance from Bradford.	Population : 1821.	Population : 1831.	Population : Increase.	Number of Looms.
1. Bradford	–	13,064	23,223	10,159	20
2. Great Horton	2 miles	7,192	10,782	3,590	1,768
3. Little Horton	1 „				
4. Bowling	1 „	3,579	5,958	2,379	209
5. Manningham	1½ „	2,474	3,564	1,090	209
Whole Borough	–	26,309	43,527	17,218	2,206
6. Heaton	2 „	1,217	1,452	235	121
7. Allerton	3 „	1,488	1,733	245	474
8. North Bierley	2 „	6,070	7,254	1,184	870
9. East Bierley	2 „				
10. Hunsworth	3½ „	870	878	8	about 60
11. Wyke	4 „	1,507	1,918	411	
12. Wibsey	2 „	– in North Bierley.			
13. Clayton	4 „	3,609	4,469	860	1,633
14. Thornton cum 15. Denholm	4 „	4,100	5,968	1,868	2,000
16. Bingley cum 17. Micklethwaite	6 „	6,176	8,037	1,861	about 1,600
18. Wilsden	5½ „	1,711	2,252	541	440
19. Baildon	5 „	2,679	3,044	365	about 600
20. East Morden	10 „	1,199	1,219	20	about 240
21. West Morden					
22. Keighley	10 „	9,223	11,176	1,953	about 1,800
23. Hainworth	9½ „				
24. Haworth	10 „	4,668	5,835	1,167	about 1,200
25. Oxnop	8 „	2,172	2,980	808	about 600
		72,798	101,742	29,944	13,844

It should be observed, that where I have placed the word *about* against the number of looms, it is merely the estimate of well-informed individuals ; in all other cases it is by actual enumeration. The estimates being conjectured, are not entitled to a high degree of confidence, but as I was limited as to time, I had no better means of obtaining the numbers ; and as I apprehend one error will correct another,

* The effect of skill is apparent throughout this statement.

another, the total of 14,000 weavers in the district will probably not be far wrong.

The finest goods, such as double-twilled shalloons, and the finest sets of $^{6}/_{4}$ wild-bores, are made in the immediate neighbourhood of Bradford; the lower qualities of stuffs are made about Keighley and Haworth.

In estimating the earnings of a weaver, it is necessary to state at the very outset, that a difficulty arises out of the nature of the work, and the mode of doing it. After weaving, the piece requires *picking*, that is, going over with a pair of steel nippers, and taking off knots, threads and other imperfections left by the process of weaving. If the weaver do this for himself, as he often does, it will take about one-third as much time as the weaving; but this is often done by the wife, and perhaps still more frequently by the weaver and his wife together. Hence it often happens, that the piece delivered is the result of the whole of his own labour, and a portion of that of his wife. This will appear in the course of the evidence about to be adduced, in which it will be found that the weaver states he can deliver a piece in such a time "with a little help from his wife."

In other cases the weaver will have two looms, at one of which he himself weaves, his wife weaving at the other. For the sake of the better wages which the finer kinds of goods afford, he will, if he have an opportunity, take out such work as his wife cannot weave without his continued supervision. Hence his own earnings will be reduced in proportion to the time he occupies; but, on the whole, there will be a gain, or he would not pursue that method. In visiting the houses of the weavers around Bradford, I had many opportunities of seeing instances of both practices, and often both practices united in the case of a single weaver and his wife. A weaver, for instance, of first-rate skill and good character, will take from one employer a $^{6}/_{4}$ shalloon of high set, and from another a $^{6}/_{4}$ wild-bore; he himself will weave the shalloon, and his wife will weave the wild-bore but as the latter requires a degree of management of which a woman is not often capable, it will take a portion of his labour. At times while not weaving, the wife will stand at the side of the husband, and pick the work as he weaves. In this way the two pieces will be the mixed result of the labour of both, but in proportions extremely difficult to ascertain. In the statements of the weavers themselves, the proportion is usually allowed for; that is, the weaver states the time in which he can complete a piece of a given set, including picking; but when a manufacturer says "such a weaver can earn so much," it may happen that the sum is really, as already explained,* the wages of two persons.

George Brearley, of Thornton, thus described his own earnings:—

"4. What are you weaving?—I am weaving shalloons.

"5. How are wages paid?—They are paid by the piece, more or less, according to the number of hanks; the hank contains 560 yards.

"6. What are you paid for shalloons?—Sixteen shillings for 19 score of hanks.

"7. What is the length and set of the goods you are weaving?—Thirty yards and a 48 set.

"8. What time does such a piece take you?—Taking all the work, that is, tying in, weaving and taking home, I must labour diligently to complete the piece in a fortnight.

"9. What would the weaving alone take?—Nine or ten days.

"10. Working how long?—Twelve hours a day, deducting the time for meals."

The above statement makes only 8*s.* per week gross wages; but the witness had to overlook a family of workers, as shown in the following question and answer:—

"11. How long do you work?—It is difficult to say. We, who are heads of families, have our children to look over, and sometimes we work a day and a half in a day.

"12. In actual work, in weaving, do you usually work more than 12 hours?—I do, generally."

George

* It will presently be further elucidated out of the mouths of the witnesses.

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George Brown, of Harden, in the township of Bingley, stated his earnings as follows :—

" 2. What are you weaving?—I am weaving figures of 50 set and 12 score and 12 hanks. I am paid 13*s.* 6*d.* at present for the piece of 30 yards. There has been a little advance lately, namely, an advance of 1*s.*

" 3. Are fancy goods also woven by power?—They are extensively.

" 4. Have you more than one loom?—Only one.

" 5. How long will it take you to weave such a piece?—I consider I am very diligent, and it takes me one week *with my wife to help me.* If I had not her to take the threads up, I should have to leave the loom to do it.

" 6. How many hours a day?—Twelve hours, with allowance for meals ; that includes all connected with it, taking it out and delivering it in, four miles to carry it.

" 7. Do you work more than 12 hours a day?—I do not on the average."

Benjamin Sowden, of the township of Clayton, described his earnings on $^6/_4$ shalloons of a high set, as follows :—

" 3. What are you now weaving?—Shalloons of 54 set, 26 score and 10 hanks. I am paid 1*l.* 11*s.* per piece of 32 yards.

" 4. What time do you usually take to weave such goods?—A fortnight and two days on the average. In the summer I work 13 or 14 hours a day, and in winter rather less. In summer I complete a piece within the fortnight, and in winter in a fortnight and three days." (This makes 13*s.* 3*d.* a week.)

Joshua Shackleton stated, that he was weaving twills (shalloons), for which he was paid 19*s.* 6*d.*, and that the piece would take him a fortnight, " with a little help."

Joseph Brook, of Little Horton, thus described his own and his wife's earnings :—

" 1. Are you now weaving?—Yes, I have two looms ; I weave at one, and my wife at the other.

" 2. Upon what kind of goods?—Upon shalloons and wild-bores ; I weave shalloons, and I occasionally help my wife in the other.

" 3. What are you paid for the shalloons?—I am paid 1*l.* 7*s.* 6*d.* for weaving the piece of 32 yards ; it is what we call a 50 set, with 26 score of hanks.

" 4. How long will it take you to weave?—I was three weeks on my last job, but generally it takes me a fortnight and three days. It is a fortnight's good work ; *but I am occasionally called off to help my wife*, and this causes me to be three days longer on my own job.

" 5. What do you get for weaving wild-bores?—Ten shillings for weaving 11 score and 8 hanks, and my wife can weave the piece in the week, *with the help I give her.*

" 6. Do you usually get out a piece a week from your wife's loom?—No, one piece with another, it takes eight days."

Thus, Joseph Brook, working alone could earn 13*s.* 9*d.* ; but, expending a portion of his time in aiding his wife, he only earns, in fact, 11*s.* ; allowing for delays, his wife earns 7*s.* 6*d.* ; but to her work he contributes labour worth 2*s.* 9*d.* (the difference between 13*s.* 9*d.* and 11*s.*) ; hence her unassisted earnings would be only 4*s.* 9*d.*, or, if fully employed, and without any delays or casualties, 7*s.* 3*d.* ; aided by him, they are 7*s.* 6*d.* to 10*s.*

As a sample of the scanty earnings of a weaver enfeebled by age, we may take the evidence of Joseph Smith, of Great Horton :—

" 2. What are you weaving?—Three-quarter plain-backs, 44 set, 5 score and 4 hanks.

" 3. What wages do you get?—Three shillings and three-pence per piece.

" 4. How long will it take you to weave a piece?—One week.

" 5. Then you cannot weave so much as you used to weave?—No."

I visited an aged weaver, named Peter Butterfield, residing at Little Horton. He is upwards of 80 years of age, and was at work upon a $^3/_4$ wild-bore of low set. He told me that he was paid 2*s.* 6*d.* per piece, and that he could get through three

three in a fortnight. One of his neighbours told me the poor old man was perpetually at work: "Go early or late," said my informant, "and you will find Peter in his loom."

It is unnecessary to multiply details on the earnings of the weavers examined; but before I bring under one view the result of the statements of the several witnesses, it may be well to give the particulars of a discussion which I shall characterise as extremely profitable, because it enabled me to determine what really is a good day's work with more accuracy than I could otherwise have done.

Mr. George Oxley, of the firm of Willet, Oxley & Co., manufacturers of shalloons, stated the wages they paid, as follows:—"The wages we give on our finest goods are, for 27 score of hanks, in a 62 set, 1*l.* 13*s.*; for 22 score and 10 hanks, in a 52 set, 1*l.* 3*s.*; for 17 score, 10 hanks, in a 50 set, plain backs, we give 16*s.*

"10. What time will the weaver take?—A good weaver will produce a piece of the first in a week and a half.

"11. If you had a man regularly in your employment, and he delivered a piece of the first kind every fortnight, should you think he was doing fair work?—I think we should.

"12. Are there many who cannot do that?—There are many who *will not*, but few who *cannot*."

This statement would doubtless be borne out by the books of the firm; but the point not shown by any master's books is that which has been already explained relative to the work of *picking* being performed by the weaver's wife; and in the present case the statement of Mr. Oxley was specifically explained by Julius Ackroyd, of Manningham, in the following examination:—

"5. Have you woven a higher set (compared with work then in his loom) lately?—I was weaving for Messrs. Willett, Oxley & Co. shalloons of 62 set, putting in 27 score of hanks, and was paid 1*l.* 13*s.*

"6. What time did such goods take you?—If I wrought them myself without any assistance, they took me a fortnight and three days; but when I have been particularly throng to get in my work, I have got my wife to pick the surface of the piece, and in that way I could perhaps get a piece done in a fortnight.*

"7. It has been stated that a piece ought to be done in nine days; could you do it?—No, I never could, and it is an impossibility for any man to do it.

"8. Can you weave 50 hanks in a day?—Not if I picked the piece. I could weave five hanks† in an hour; but to pick the surface would take me half an hour, or half an hour and five minutes, to do it in a workmanlike manner."

David Topham, of Great Horton, gave evidence of similar import:—

"4. Have you woven other‡ goods?—Yes; last spring I was weaving shalloons for Messrs. Willett, Oxley & Co., one of 62 set, and 27 score of hanks, and one of 58 set, with the same weft; we were then paid 1*l.* 15*s.* (now 1*l.* 13*s.*) for the one, and 1*l.* 10*s.* (now 1*l.* 9*s.*) for the other.

"5. What time would that kind of goods take you?—I wove two warps, containing eight pieces, and I was eighteen weeks weaving them. I think I seldom worked less than 15 hours, and sometimes more."

I took more than my ordinary pains to ascertain the character of both Julius Ackroyd and David Topham, and I found that they were esteemed skilful and steady

* On one occasion I saw a piece of shalloons woven under the following circumstances: 1. The man was in the loom weaving. 2. A boy of 10 years of age was winding bobbins. 3. The wife was at her husband's elbow picking the work. 4. His daughter was at the back of the loom taking up the broken threads of the warp, for it was not a good warp. When the piece was taken home, the wages would be paid as the earnings of *one man*, yet the piece was really the work of a family.

† Five hanks an hour is 50 hanks a day, actually working 10 hours; with a long summer's day's work of 12 hours it is 60 hanks. An idea of the labour may be given by the number of yards of weft to be put in, and the number of *picks* or shoots (throws of the shuttle) in weaving a $^{6}/_{4}$ shalloon per hour and minute; 50 hanks, 28,000 yards, or 18,066 picks, of 1 ½ yard, being 1,806 picks per hour, or 31 picks per minute.

‡ Alluding to previous evidence.

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steady workmen, and in every respect worthy of credit. The work they described themselves as having performed, was, indeed, what but few weavers could do. Julius Ackroyd's work would amount to 36 hanks a day, woven and picked, and David Topham's would exceed 40 hanks. The gross earnings of the former would be 13 *s.* 2 *d.*, that of the latter, 14 *s.* 8 *d.*, when fully employed.

The evidence of Mr. Robert Leach went to confirm the statements of many of the weavers as to the time taken to weave figured stuffs:

"1. Do you employ hand-loom weavers?—Yes, I employ about 250.

"2. On what kind of goods?—Fancy goods; that is, figured merinos exclusively.

"3. Are they made by men or women?—By men, chiefly.

"4. Do you employ power-looms?—None.

"5. What wages do you pay?—For weaving 11 score and 15 hanks in a 50 set, I pay 12 *s.* 6 *d.*

"6. In what time do you expect a piece to be delivered?—When we set a weaver to work, and deliver to him a warp, and the machine (the Jacquard engine), we expect our weavers to deliver a piece in a week.

"7. You would consider that fair work?—Yes, one piece is a fair week's work for a weaver.

"8. Are there weavers who could not do a piece in a week?—Yes, there are; it requires a tolerably good workman to do a piece a week in figures."

The following is a list of a week's gross and net earnings of the several witnesses whom I had an opportunity of examining:—

	Age.	Gross Earnings.		Net Earnings.	
		s.	*d.*	*s.*	*d.*
George Brearley	51	8	–	6	–
Jonathan Elam	46	10	6	8	6
George Brown	34 (with help)	13	6	11	6
Benjamin Sowden	33	13	3	11	3
His wife	31	6	–	4	7
Joshua Shackleton	(with a liittle help)	9	9	7	9
Joseph Brooke	39	13	9	11	9
His wife		7	3	5	10
Elizabeth Dracup, widow	34	5	6	4	1
Samuel Woodman	35	6	6	5	10
Joseph Smith	72 (feeble)	3	3	2	7
John Crabtree (old, but diligent)		5	6	4	1
His daughter	26	7	–	5	7
Abraham Bastow	60	11	6	9	6
David Topham (generally)		13	9	11	7
Earned in 18 consecutive weeks		14	8	12	8
His daughter (grown up)		8	–	6	7
Robert Leach's statement (a master)		12	6	10	6
Julius Ackroyd	40	13	9	12	9
His wife		4	6	3	1
J. Robinson, 4 pieces moreens, at 3/		12	–	10	7
Jonas Midgley's statement:					
Good hands at moreens		12	–	10	7
More usual wages	from	6	–	4	7
	to	7	–	5	7
Samuel Sowden		9	4	7	4
Peter Butterfield	80	3	9	3	1

The first column consists of gross earnings, the second of net earnings;* the difference consists of certain deductions, which are thus explained in a written statement handed in by Joseph Brook, and appended to his evidence:—

"The

* I must again repeat the caution already given in the case of the cloth weavers. These earnings are for full work, and make no allowance for unavoidable casualties. To assume that the weaver can at all times command these earnings, is to assume that the gardener can command the earnings of the spring during a hard frost.

"The following expenses fall weekly upon the hand-loom weaver:

	Upon 6/4 Pieces.	Upon 4/4 and 3/4 Pieces.	
	s. d.	d.	
Sizing	– 3	– 2	generally done in the family.
Winding	– 10	– 7	
Twisting or gearing	– 2½	– 1½	unavoidable.
Wear and tear of loom	– 4	– 3	
Light, the year round	– 4½	– 3½	
	2 –	1 5	6/4 11d. 3/4 8d.

As we are considering, at present, individual earnings, or rather *individual capacity to earn*, I have allowed the whole deductions, except where done by the weaver, although it is seldom that the expenses of sizing and winding are paid out of the family. As in the case of the cloth weavers, the statement comprises persons of every age, and of every degree of skill, from men in full vigour, weaving the very best description of goods, at the highest rate of wages, down to the superannuated Peter Butterfield, obliged to put up with the lowest kind of goods, requiring neither skill nor strength, which a child can weave, and which, consequently, are only paid for at a child's rate of wages, the inevitable conclusion is, that any thing above 10 *s.* per week can only be earned by the most skilful and steady hands; that ordinary weavers seldom exceed 6 *s.* or 7 *s.*, and that any decay of power reduces the earnings of the worsted weaver below 6 *s.* To earn over 14 *s.*, a worsted weaver must be a man of very superior power, and must labour to an extent to endanger health and shorten life; and whenever the *apparent* earnings* of a worsted weaver exceed 14 *s.*, we may conclude with absolute certainty, that the sum named is the result of the labour of more than one person.

As in the case of the cloth weavers, the above statements suppose full employment, an advantage which the stuff weavers do not enjoy. They, like the cloth weavers, are liable to the consequences of commercial embarrassment, though I believe not in an equal degree to the latter. The manufacture of cloth is carried on by small manufacturers, who are themselves both weavers and spinners. They are completely ignorant of the circumstances affecting distant markets; and in adapting their supply to the demand, they are guided solely by the state of the market on the last market day, and not by any enlarged prospective views. In the event of a slack market, they will refuse a warp perhaps to one weaver; a second dull market-day, and a second weaver will be refused work, and so they go on until their production is confined to their own families. In the event of a brisk demand, they, being ignorant, are apt to be over sanguine, and they work on, until the consequence is a great aggravation of subsequent depression. The only check upon this is the intelligence of the Leeds merchants; but they, again, are less cognizant of the circumstances affecting supply and demand than the merchants of great shipping markets, and they are consequently guided by their local market to a greater extent than a more enlarged view could induce. The worsted trade, on the other hand, is much less in the hands of small manufacturers than it

* A statement will be found appended to the evidence of Mr. Thomas Willett, of the earnings of 24 of his weavers for periods ranging from 9 to 11 weeks. It will be seen that these *apparent* earnings are so large as to render it certain they are in most cases the result of the labour of two persons. Where the gross sum is above 17 *s.*, the deduction for *picking* should be on the assumption that it is wholly the work of another person; that is, *one-third*—[*See* Julius Ackroyd's testimony, already quoted.] Where the sum does not exceed 17 *s.*, a lower allowance, say *one-fourth*, will be sufficient. When it is under 14 *s.*, it may be considered as the weaver's own earnings, and a good hand he must be. The following are the gross statements:—

	s. d.		s. d.		s. d.
No. 2 - sum paid	21 4	No. 280 - sum paid	21 –	No. 183 - sum paid	17 3
72 „	15 5	148 „	19 3	183 „	18 4
76 „	21 4	13 „	13 9	147 „	17 8
80 „	14 3	15 „	16 6	303 „	15 6
107 „	17 3	16 „	16 3	11 „	13 –
116 „	15 6	34 „	16 9	28 „	8 1
205 „	22 –	81 „	13 –	61 „	8 8
217 „	20 10	123 „	10 10	62 „	8 –

Another statement shows that, in 10 weeks of full employment, Messrs. T. Willett & Co. paid to 500 weavers, 2,025 *l.*, which is exactly 8 *s.* 1½ *d.* per week to the whole of their hands; among these there are only 70 or 80 women, but no boys.

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it formerly was, and than the cloth trade now is. Many of the large manufacturers of Bradford are merchants also. They *do*, to a certain extent, take enlarged and prospective views; and although they, too, are influenced by what is done at the "piece-hall," they do, to a certain extent, adapt production to the general, rather than to a temporary demand. This, to a certain extent, keeps trade tolerably steady. Against this, however, must be placed one of the effects produced by the power-loom. In the event of a decreased demand, the manufacturer who employs power, as well as hand-looms, will, of course, work his fixed capital as long as possible. Hence the services of the hand-loom weaver are first dispensed with. Mr. George Oxley, whose firm has 100 power-looms, and employs about 100 hand-loom weavers, gave evidence on this point as follows:—

"28. In case of a depression of trade, would it not fall chiefly on the hand-loom weaver?—Yes. In case the goods were the same (meaning similar), and were made with equal advantage, the hand-loom weaver would suffer."

Mr. Thomas Willett also gave similar testimony:—

"16. Do you give constant employment the whole year to your power-loom weavers?—We have hitherto done so. * * *

"17. In the event of a slack trade, would the decrease of employment fall first on the hand-loom weavers?—It would, as a matter of course."

Here, then, the power-loom, considered in relation to the worsted trade, stands in the position of the small clothiers' own family, considered in relation to the whole body of cloth-weavers; the power-loom in the one case, and the clothiers' family in the other, being the last to be deprived of work. Up to this point matters are equal: where the stuff weaver has a slight advantage is, in the better and more equal adaptation of production to demand, as already suggested.

Still there are upon record periods of considerable distress, and scarcely a year passes in which there is not a considerable amount of want of employment. On this point, George Brearley was examined as follows:—

"30. Is employment tolerably good at present?—It is; it became brisk about the latter end of May. All last winter, especially after Christmas, it was very slack.

"31. Was it more so than usual at that season?—It was; for nearly two years it has been a very slack time with us." (*i. e.* in the township of Thornton.)

George Brown spoke of the *slackness* of the past year, but his evidence showed there was no such thorough and complete privation of employment as the cloth weavers had to endure:—

"15. Last year did you get a piece a week?—Last year there was not a full demand for the fancy goods, and we were obliged to work at plain goods; our wages were consequently lower.

"16. Were you out of employment at any time?—No."

Mr. George Oxley gave evidence as follows:—

"27. You have some experience as to the condition of the weavers; are they not subject to occasional distress?—They have been occasionally subject to severe distress. If their present wages could be commanded at all times, their sufferings would be much less; but in case of a depression of trade, they must suffer severely."

In the case of the cloth weavers an attempt was made to measure the operation of want of employment upon wages. In the evidence on the worsted trade, nothing of the kind offers itself; all, therefore, that can be affirmed on the subject is, that the weaver's condition is something worse than their own statements of wages indicate. In duration the periods of depression are certainly shorter than in the case of the cloth weavers, but, in one respect, they are more grievous. The worsted weavers' wages being under two-thirds of those of the cloth weavers, the former are less able to bear up against such disasters.

With regard to the mode of relief, all the evidence on the subject goes to prove that the self-reliance of the worsted weaver is conspicuous—is most exemplary. On this point, Joseph Brook, of Little Horton, gave the following evidence:—

"33. In periods of distress what means are adopted to alleviate it?—The weavers get on by going on credit as long as they can.

"34. Are any funds collected?—Sometimes there are, but not generally, unless the distress be very great.

"35. In

"35. In cases of distress is any attempt made to find other work?—Yes, but it is almost impossible.

"36. The weavers do not often resort to the poor-rates, do they?—No, they generally keep themselves independent of the poor-rates.

"37. Do any of the clubs, or secret orders, give relief out of their funds in periods of distress?—No, but such societies will relieve by a voluntary contribution.

The Reverend Mr. Bull, incumbent of Byerley, whose evidence on all points connected with the moral condition of the weavers is valuable, gave the following testimony as to the conduct of the weavers under the trying circumstances to which they are exposed, and especially as to their exemplary self-reliance:—

"10. Under the distresses to which the weavers have been subject, what has been their conduct; how have they borne their distresses?—I can bear them witness, because I have seen them, that they have borne them with exemplary fortitude, and have proved, in many instances, that they had practised very strict economy out of the small pittance of their earnings: and here I would observe, that many persons form a very erroneous estimate of the working man's condition; if they inquire about his wages in better times, they seldom consider what holes he has to mend, which have been made in the bad times that have preceded those better times. *A three months' slack makes a great gap* in a poor man's resources.

"11. What means are occasionally resorted to, to relieve the distresses when they occur?—The most strenuous exertions made to relieve the poor are made by the poor themselves. They do not enter their subscriptions in newspapers; but if they were not very charitable towards one another, they would often perish. Independently of their own charity towards one another, there have been considerable funds contributed during the last ten years, when what is called a slack time has occurred. On the last occasion, at the commencement of the present year, I acted under the direction of a committee as the agent in distributing 800*l*. in this town (Bradford) and neighbourhood;* and I must do the hand-loom weavers the justice to say, that they were among the least clamorous, as well as the most necessitous. I would observe with regard to the sum mentioned, that it was expended chiefly in the relief of cases of extreme distress. Many hand-loom weavers did not come to us, but went to the shopkeeper (that is, used their credit), until they could go no longer."

The resort of the worsted weavers to a benefit society, or club of some kind, is very general; indeed, it is a custom of the working population generally of the north of England so to do. To enter into minute detail on the subject† would be merely to repeat what I have stated under this head in reference to the cloth weavers. I will therefore only add, that many persons in better circumstances belong to some secret order, such as the Odd Fellows, or Ancient Foresters, for the sake of the example it affords. A statement of the number of these fraternities, with the number of lodges into which they are divided, and the number of members enrolled on their books, would be curious and instructive evidence respecting the provident habits of the people.

To the aggregate condition of the worsted weaver's family, the head, as we have seen, contributes less than in the case of the cloth trade, whilst the children, as will presently appear, contribute more. This is far from a desirable state of things. It originated in the custom of employing children, which the lightness of the work facilitated, and is now aided by extensive general adaptation of all spinning and weaving machinery to young hands. In the clothing villages the few slubbing mills give employment only to a small number of children, whilst in and around Bradford machinery is confirming the transfer of the business of weaving from the father to his children.

Considering

* Quære if it gave one day's wages to the labouring classes.—*See* the previous remarks on the trifling nature of such relief.

† One extract from the evidence (that of George Brearley) will suffice:—

"53. Do the weavers of your township usually become members of benefit societies or clubs?—Yes, most of them are members of one kind of club or another. We have 'Friendly Societies' and 'Secret Orders,' and 'Sick Clubs,' and 'Dead Briefs,' and some of all kinds. I myself belong to a friendly society, one of those under the Act."

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Considering the constancy of the employment, and the freedom from all deductions, the young women and girls employed upon the power-loom—the better tool—are actually earning more, in some cases considerably more, than the father employed on the hand-loom, the inferior tool. Appended to the evidence of Mr. Thomas Willett, is a paper showing the average wages earned by 94 power-loom weavers for five weeks, to have been 11*s.* 2¾*d.* per week. The most skilful only of the hand-loom weavers can secure that sum free from all deductions.

The earnings of Messrs. Willett, Oxley & Co's. power-loom weavers for 10 weeks averaged 9*s.* 5*d.*; this was "the average of good, bad, idle and industrious weavers for the time specified." "We could," said Mr. Oxley, "select 30 weavers from those, whose weekly earnings the year round, would not average less than 12*s.* or 14*s.* per week."

In addition to, and in illustration of, the observations made respecting the effect of a family on the condition of the hand-loom weaver in the cloth trade, it will be sufficient to cite a few cases of family earnings:—

	£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.
George Brearley, wife, and eight* children—						
His own earnings†		8	–			
Two sons (men)		16	–			
Daughter		6	–			
				1	10	–
George Browne, wife and four children—						
His own earnings		13	6			
His son's (age 13)		4	–			
				–	17	6
Jonathan Elam, wife and three children—						
His own earnings		10	6			
His wife's		7	6			
His son's, as a machine-maker		2	–			
				1	–	–
Joseph Brook, wife and six children—						
His own earnings		13	9			
His wife's		7	3			
Son's earnings (aged 16)		6	–			
Daughter's (aged 18) at power-loom		9	6			
				1	16	6
Joseph Smith, a wife and daughter—						
His own earnings		3	3			
His daughter's (aged 27)		9	–			
				–	12	3
John Crabtree, widower, with two children—						
His own earnings		5	6			
His daughter's (grown up)		5	–			
His son's (age 15)		6	–			
				–	16	6
Abraham Bastow, wife and eight children—						
His own earnings		11	6			
Daughter's earnings (aged 16)		7	–			
Son's earnings (in coal pit, aged 14)		7	6			
Another (8 years of age)		2	8			
				1	8	–
David Topham, wife and two children—						
His own earnings		13	9			
Daughter's earnings (grown up)		8	–			
				1	1	9

John

* The number of children refers only to those under the weaver's own roof. George Brearley has nine, but one is married.

† There was a want of candour, and disposition to evade in this witness, and I believe his earnings to be under-stated. His sons I found were in the habit of delivering a piece of figured stuffs every week, for which they were paid 12*s.*, so that his family income was probably at times not less than 40*s.*

John Robinson, wife and six children, all under 8 years—
His own earnings (no other income) – 12 –

– 12 –*

It cannot be too often repeated, that these are gross earnings *when in full work*. Joseph Brook's son, when I visited him, was at home ill; here was at once a serious loss of income. In a family of three or four workers, subsisting, as they must do, on low diet, it is rare indeed that a year passes without the sickness of one or more of the members. Two of these casualties occurring at one and the same time, and this is not uncommon, will reduce the family earnings to one-half. A period of excessive toil absolutely requires some relaxation: the above statement being *for a single week's work under the most favourable circumstances*, supposes no such relaxation. Again, the weaver cannot always get work; it perhaps never occurs, that some are not unemployed; at times half of them will be in that condition. A three months' "slack" is spoken of by the Rev. Mr. Bull and other witnesses. Though it would be difficult to estimate the exact allowance, it cannot but be considerable.

The two extreme cases are those of Joseph Brook and John Robinson. The former has just attained the weaver's most favourable position, himself with unimpaired powers, two of his children earning fair wages, and a third able to wind bobbins, and save him from that deduction. But his daughter is just at a marriageable age, and the probability is, that the family will shortly be deprived of her co-operation; but then the other children will be advancing, so as to repair the losses of those who successively marry off.

In the case of John Robinson we find a family of eight persons dependent on his labour alone, a condition infinitely worse than that of the enfeebled Joseph Smith, with a gross family income, when fully employed of 12*s.* 3*d.*, for the support of three persons.

In the worsted trade the practice of teaching their own children to weave, necessarily exists, for the simple reason, that the parents have nothing else to put them to, except in a very small number of cases; and that the children should be made to earn something, is a matter of importance, where the weaver's own earnings are necessarily small. The practice of teaching other children however, does not exist to any extent, though there are a few cases. There is a general, and it may be added, a correct impression, that worsted weaving is a worse trade than cloth weaving; and as this impression receives confirmation, from the inability of the weaver to offer an inducement to the parent in the shape of wages, the practice, as may be supposed, is fast falling into disuse.

On

* The following statement was put in by George Brearley. It exhibits the income and expenditure of a few persons with very large families, apparently selected for the purpose:—

Names of Heads of Families.	Number of Family.	Number of Workers.	Total Amount of Wages.	Deductions: Winding and Gearing.	Rent and Taxes.	Fire and Light.	Amount of Weekly Deductions.	Clear Weekly Income.	Weekly Average per head.	Daily Average per head for Food, &c.	Description of Work.
			s. *d.*	*s.* *d.*	*s.* *d.*	*s.* *d.*	*s.* *d.*	*s.* *d.*	*s.* *d.*	*d.*	
W. Atkinson, Denholm Clough	7	2	12 11	– 9	1 4	1 9	3 10	9 1	1 3½	2	6-4 plain bks.
Thomas Whalley	9	3	20 –	1 3	2 –	2 6	5 9	14 3	1 7	2¾	6-4, 3-4
Joseph Rushworth, ditto	5	1	11 –	– 6	1 3	1 8	3 5	7 7	1 6	2½	6-4
Jonathan Craven, Bodholes	7	1	10 –	– 6	1 –	1 6	3 –	7 –	1 –	1¾	,,
Jonathan Jennings, Close Head	12	4	26 –	1 6	2 3	3 –	6 9	19 3	1 7½	2½	6-4, 3-4
Jonas Ackroyd - - ditto	8	2	14 –	– 9	2 –	2 –	4 9	9 3	1 2	2	6-4
Joseph Rushworth, Foreside	7	1	11 –	– 6	1 3	1 6	3 3	7 9	1 2	2	,,
Jonathan Craven, Green-lane	7	2	14 –	– 6	2 4	2 –	4 10	9 2	1 3¼	2¼	,,
Mark Hodgson, Headley	12	4	20 –	1 3	1 9	2 3	5 3	14 9	1 3	2¼	,, low sorts
John Robinson, Town End	8	1	10 –	– 6	2 –	1 3	3 9	6 3	– 9½	1¼	,, plain bks.
Matt. Robertshaw, Close Head	9	3	15 –	1 6	1 4	2 6	5 4	9 8	1 1	2	,,
A. Butterfield, Green Clough Top	6	2	12 –	1 –	1 9	1 9	4 6	7 6	1 3	2¼	,, figures

Yorkshire (West Riding.)

Report from *H.S.Chapman*, Esq.

On these points, the following extracts from George Brearley's evidence may be offered :—

" 56. Is there difficulty in getting into other trades ?—There is, every thing is filled.

" 57. Do the weavers make efforts to get their children into other trades ?—They are disposed to do so, but it cannot be done without a little property, and that is not usual among weavers at the present day.

" 58. Do those weavers who have more looms than one, take children to teach ?—Not so much as formerly; if they can, the parents send their children to factories."

On the subject of the moral condition of the worsted weavers, I have already stated, that the evidence of the Rev. Mr. Bull* is valuable. Mr. Bull's pastoral office gives him opportunities of becoming cognizant of the habits of the labouring population in general; and the manner in which, it is well known, he avails himself of those opportunities, gives a value to his statements, which is still further enhanced by the concurrent testimony of others. I proceed at once therefore to make extracts from his evidence touching the attendance of the weavers at places of public worship, and their attention to the education of their children :—

" 12. Have you looked over the instructions of the Central Board† on the subject of the moral condition and state of education among the weaving population ?—As to their Scriptural information, I can say, that I have met with hand-loom weavers who are what I call sound divines, capable of giving Scriptural information to the Commissioners themselves. There are far more of them, however, who are more addicted to the study of politics, than of the Bible, which I account for as a consequence of their harassed condition. They are not at ease; they feel that something is generally wrong; and they get together and read the newspapers, to find out what is the matter. If they could obtain a good day's wages for a fair day's work, the greater part of them would leave politics to take care of themselves. As to frequenting places of worship, I believe the hand-loom weavers go as much as any other class; but there are many hindrances in many parts adjacent to our large towns. In many places, like Bradford (parish), which extends 12 miles one way, and eight the other, there are not places of worship ‡ sufficiently contiguous, for the neglect to provide which, I hold the Legislature responsible. But many of the weavers are destitute of Sunday clothes, which the Commissioners would find very hard to get, if they had to weave 11 score of hanks for 6*s.* or 7*s.* I wish they (the weavers) would come to church in rags, and let their richer neighbours see the condition of the poor.

" As to the inquiry, whether they subscribe to book societies, and frequent mechanics' institutions, I would observe, that a hand-loom weaver finds it very difficult to subscribe to his own cupboard; and my belief is, that nothing but poverty prevents their pursuing intellectual pleasures and improvement to any extent that is desirable; but 'insufficient wages,' producing 'excessive toil,' to the extent of 12 or 14 hours a day of actual labour, leaves the hand-loom weaver to the alternations of labour and bed, and his children to those of bed and mill. To erect mechanics' institutes, or seminaries of learning, for people who have no time to attend upon them, is only to insult them. I observe, that the savings of the hand-loom weavers are alluded to, and an inquiry is suggested, whether they subscribe to benefit clubs. I am personally acquainted with several instances where hand-loom weavers had, in former years, a little store in the savings bank, and were also subscribers to benefit societies, or sick clubs; but within the last two or three years they have been obliged to withdraw from the savings banks, and to discontinue their contributions to the benefit society, having now no resource left in the time of distress but the cold hand of charity, or the tender mercies of the Poor Law Commissioners.

" I see also an inquiry respecting the children of the hand-loom weavers, and the extent to which they attend places of worship and Sunday schools. I have never had less than 300 Sunday school children under my care for the last ten years; I have now 1,000 on our lists. I am decidedly of opinion, that the children

* I asked Mr. Bull to give evidence at the especial request of several hand-loom weavers, conveyed to me in writing.

† Mr. Bull had a copy in his hand, to which he had before referred.

‡ Mr. Bull seems to have had the Church of England only in view.

children of the hand-loom weavers have been among the most orderly and satisfactory of our scholars." *

Yorkshire (West Riding.)

Report from *H.S. Chapman*, Esq.

Joseph Brook stated his own experience on the above points as follows :—

" 28. Do the children in your neighbourhood generally attend the Sunday schools ?—They do very generally ; the parents desire to send their children to school ; but you will bear this in mind, that many are obliged to stop away for want of decent clothing.

" 29. Are there many children completely deprived of education from that cause ?—I believe there are.

" 30. Can

* The following paper on the inefficiency of the Sunday school, as an instrument of education, was put in by the Rev. Mr. Bull :—" On the subject of Sunday schools generally, and the attendance of the children of the working people on them, I can speak from long experience and observation. Since I was 16 years of age, I have not been, that I am aware of, twenty Sundays an absentee from the Sunday school, when able to attend, which has generally been the case. I would remark, 1st. With respect to the institution of Sunday schools ; 2d. As to their existence in manufacturing districts, and their general efficiency. 1st. With respect to the Sunday school institution, it is well known to have originated in the neglected state of the religious education of the poor in large towns ; it afterwards extended to villages also. There were many country parishes and small towns where a sufficient religious education was provided by parents and masters, who, according to the order of the national church [see Rubrick at the end of the catechism], caused their children, servants and apprentices to come to church to be instructed, or rather catechised by the parochial minister, and to have their home lessons drawn out by suitable catechising after the second lesson of the afternoon service. But as to reading and spelling, the national church recognises no such employment on the Sabbath day. It is taken for granted in her Rubrick that in a christian country (so esteemed), society will never be so degraded, nor Government so besotted, as not to provide for the mechanical part of education, without trenching on the Sabbath day, devoting that day to the great doctrinal and practical lessons of Christianity, and not to the drudgery of A, B, C. Respecting, therefore, as I do very generally, the motives of many who support Sunday schools, and especially Sunday school teachers (whose support is the greatest of all), I look upon them, on the whole, as indicating a very unsatisfactory state of society. I acknowledge with pleasure that they have done considerable good, but more of a negative than of a positive kind. 2d. As to the condition of these institutions in the manufacturing districts, and their general efficiency, I conceive that we spend an immensity of time, labour and money to a comparatively small advantage. 1st. The actual time during which instruction can be imparted in the best regulated Sunday schools, where due attendance upon divine worship is practised, cannot exceed two hours. The nominal hours of attendance may be three, but so much is engrossed in various ways, that I am persuaded considerably less than two hours is given to reading and instruction. The chief part of this time is spent in the mere mechanical exercises of reading, spelling and A, B, C. In very few instances are the teachers accustomed to 'teach' the scholars ; they are for the most part mere witnesses of their poor exercises ; little or nothing is explained or applied. The teachers are generally a most respectable body, but they themselves have very little opportunity of instruction. They are chiefly such as gain their livelihood by labour, and for the most part work 'by the factory bell,' which, under the present system of 13 hours and a half occupation (12 of actual toil), does not 'ring off' till half-past seven. After that late hour there is neither energy nor opportunity for Sunday school teachers to *learn* that they may *teach*. Nature is exhausted. The human frame is not inexhaustible, like the steam-engines, and looms, and spindles, and devils* of the capitalist. It is not to be wondered at that the Sunday-school children should not generally imbibe religious views, when the schools are so much mere places of confinement and taskwork ; or that they should afterwards fall into the snares of those who deride the Divine Revelation which they have been made to peruse under such unengaging circumstances. I see no remedy for this, whether as affecting the hand-loom weavers or others, *but less time at the mill*. By a Twelve Hours' Factory Act (ten of actual labour) there would be a possibility of establishing evening schools, rendering the *task-work* of the Sunday schools unnecessary, and preparing a description of teachers who would be qualified to 'teach' and to interest the young. In the manufacturing districts it not unfrequently happens that Sunday scholars seldom, if ever, attend divine worship ; it is an essential part of the plan. In the outskirts of our large towns there are (where the hand-loom weavers are most numerous) many places of this sort, and some, where, *for lack of opportunity* on the week-day, the objectionable practice of teaching to write on the Lord's day prevails. Can it be wondered at if a population thus reared should " neither fear God nor regard man ?" So much the more is the neglect of the Legislature to be condemned, which, professing to establish the throne on the basis of the Divine word, has not yet extended to the great mass of the people, who are styled *the poor*, that protection against excessive toil and unreasonable occupation of their time, and that measure of secular, but especially of religious instruction, which might justly be expected from a Government professing such principles. The Christian church, which that Government professes to foster and protect, should have followed up this fast increasing population with the means of grace, and with the opportunities of instruction, and not suffered such masses to grow up in so awful a deficiency of good, sound, useful, and, above all, Christian knowledge. There are, I am sorry to say, some professed patrons of Sunday schools who have declared that the children of a working man can get all the instruction that is requisite on the Lord's day, and have made this their infamous and detestable excuse for working our youth daily longer than mechanics, masons, convicts or slaves. Such men as these are the arch apostles of infidelity, and under their patronage surely every noxious weed in principle or practice may grow. In fine, it appears to me, that if our Sunday schools succeed, they will procure their own abolition—a race of parents being reared who will make the Sunday school their own hearth, and take the post of teachers themselves."

" * The name of a certain machine in the worsted trade."

Yorkshire (West Riding.)

Report from *H. S. Chapman*, Esq.

"30. Can the weavers generally read and write?—I should think that two-thirds of the adult weavers can read, but not above one out of four can write. I wish to say, that I consider the Sunday schools do not afford a sufficient education for a working man: there is scarcely any thing but reading taught.

"31. Is reading well taught?—It is in general.

"32. The children now taught, will cause the proportion of untaught persons to diminish, will they not?—Yes, but the Sunday schools have not been attended to in our neighbourhood for many years; their effect will not be much seen for some time; but it has already begun to be visible. It depends much on the condition of the working classes whether the children attend or not."

On the whole, the attention paid to education is less systematic in and around Bradford, than in the neighbourhood of Leeds. In the latter borough, there is a degree of emulation among the several sects,* a wholesome and creditable competition, so to speak, to render their respective schools well attended, and to cause their scholars to put on a decent appearance. Each sect publishes its annual report, and points with not unworthy pride to the increase since the last year. In Bradford much good is doubtless being done; but the spirit I have described, seems hitherto to have been wanting: I mentioned this to several persons who interest themselves on the subject, and I was assured, that the spirit is arising, and that a very few years will produce marked results. With this statement Joseph Brook's evidence coincides.

As embezzlement has been charged against the worsted weavers to a greater extent than against the cloth weavers, I considered it my duty to examine the allegation with the greatest care. The first witness whose evidence I shall cite, is Mr. Thomas Willett, by whose firm 500 hand-loom weavers are constantly employed. His testimony is as follows:—

"19. Have you much to complain of on the score of embezzlement?—No, I think not; out of the number we employ, we ought not to complain. We never set a weaver to work unless we have something of a character with him; and if, on delivering his work, we find good reason to believe that we have been wronged, we get rid of him. In this way we have a good body of weavers.

"20. Then you do not consider embezzlement 'a crying evil'?—As far as my own observation is concerned, I should say not."

Mr. Robert Leech, who employs 250 weavers, whose experience in the trade generally is great, gave the following testimony:—

"21. Have you had much cause to complain of embezzlement of weft by the weaver?—I have heard of a case now and then, but I have no cause to complain on that score myself.

"22. When a weaver leaves out a few hanks, do you deduct from his wages?† —Not if the piece is good; if bad, we do; but then the deduction is no more than just.

"23. You would not discharge a weaver for leaving out weft?—Not always; not unless it is frequently the case. I always pass my judgment on the piece; and if it is good, and some weft is left out, so much the better. I wish to say, that weavers frequently deliver in the piece, and say there is more weft than there is, for fear of being grumbled at.

"24. But fair conduct towards the weaver would have a tendency to check that?—Yes; I think where the master passes his judgment on the piece *before* he asks what there is in it, it will prevent such conduct."

Having given the testimony of two master-manufacturers,‡ the weavers themselves may be heard in defence of their order. On this subject, Joseph Brook gave evidence as follows:—

"33. Are you aware whether the practice of embezzlement exists to any extent?—I can say with respect to my own neighbourhood, where I have lived for a dozen years, that I know only of one prosecution and conviction the whole time.

"34. Is

* I include the Established Church in this term.

† This question was asked, because undue strictness might obviously lead to embezzlement.

‡ Mr. George Oxley gave similar testimony; but Mr. John Milner asserted the existence of the practice among the worst-paid weavers.

"34. Is there any temptation to embezzle from the manner in which the work is required to be done?—Yes, very great; the temptation is this:—some manufacturers compel the weavers to put in a certain quantity of weft; if two or three hanks be left out, their wages are abated; the consequence is, that, to prevent that reduction, the weaver is tempted to conceal what he may have been unable to weave in. I must say, however, that there are very few masters who are so strict; I never worked for any. I have known honest men who would not embezzle, throw their weft into the masters' bins clandestinely, to prevent the reduction of wages; others have said, in taking their work home, that their master had given a hank or two too much weft. In short, embezzlement is more in the brains of those who speak about it, than in reality."

Notwithstanding this evidence, it was stated to me by a gentleman of great experience in the trade, but whose sources of information are not so great as formerly, that the evil did exist to a greater extent than the witnesses were content to state in open court. As I had already had proofs of his knowledge in other matters, and as I knew him to be one of the weavers' sincerest friends; as, moreover, every word he had spoken to me respecting the weavers had savoured of kindness and benevolence, I felt it incumbent on me to inquire further in private. This determination was strengthened by seeing a large placard, headed in large letters, "embezzlement," and containing rules respecting the return of waste, posted up in some of the manufacturers' taking-in rooms, and by the supposition that my witnesses might have motives to conceal the truth. Accordingly, I made private inquiries in every possible quarter, and the result was such as to confirm, in every possible way, the statements already quoted. Poverty does certainly occasionally produce the offence; in some cases also it may arise from bad moral training—depravity, as it is called; but that embezzlement exists to an extent to be called a practice, I feel myself entitled, from the care I have taken to come at a right decision, to disbelieve.

As regards temperance, if there be a difference on comparing the cloth weavers with the worsted weavers, I believe it will be rather in favour of the latter. The Rev. Mr. Bull stated in evidence, that he thought them the most temperate portion of the population. Joseph Brook stated, that the population of his township (Horton), is very temperate, adding, "I could not point out four decided drunkards in the whole neighbourhood." Without dwelling on this head, I shall merely state, that my own observation leads me to entertain a most favourable opinion of the worsted weavers on the score of sobriety. On the general conduct of the weavers, Mr. Leach said, "The weavers I have had to deal with, have been selected and recommended, and I can say that they are an orderly body. When trade is brisk, the master will set weavers on at random, but generally recommendations as to character are required, and that has a tendency to keep them orderly."

It must not be assumed, that the several witnesses intended to hold up the weavers as patterns of diligence, prudence, honesty and temperance. They had, be it observed, to meet allegations, or rather to answer questions, which, if they did not absolutely assume the weavers to be the very reverse, at all events raised doubts on the subject. Not one of the witnesses would deny that there are both improvident and bad men amongst them, but, as a body, the evidence of the witnesses exhibits a faithful picture of the weavers' moral condition. Of course, I use the phrase "moral condition" as the witnesses understood it, and I apprehend as the instructions intended, that is, in its ordinary acceptation. If we erect a high standard of morality, what class of the population will bear the test? It would be unjust indeed to expect that the morality of a hand-loom weaver, who subsists on six or eight shillings a week, should tally with the enlarged views of a philosopher. The hand-loom weaver is moral to the extent of his knowledge. His course of action comes generally nearer to his own standard than is the case among many classes in a more favourable position; that his standard is not high, is chargeable certainly not against him. If the standard of morality were raised, from the favourable state of mind of the weavers as a body, an improved course of action would rapidly follow.

Before digesting the portion of the evidence which relates to the past condition of the worsted weavers, the state of the few who still remain in Leeds demands a brief notice.

Yorkshire (West Riding.)

Report from *H.S. Chapman*, Esq.

In Leeds there are rather more than 700 stuff weavers. Two articles only are manufactured there, namely, plaid stuffs and camblets. The wages which the plaid and camblet weavers are able to earn, do not greatly differ from the earnings of the stuff weavers about Bradford, but, if any thing, they are rather better. Edward Sunderland thus described what he could earn upon good work :—

"5. What prices were* you paid?—8*s.* 6*d.* for weaving 40 yards.

"6. What time would it take you?—It depends upon the quality of the worsted: if good, I could do it in nine days; if bad, it would take a fortnight. I mean nine days the whole warp of three pieces."

This makes 12*s.* 9*d.* for bad work, that is, warps difficult to weave, and 17*s.* for good, a sum which the most skilful and diligent weavers of Bradford on the best work there would find it extremely difficult to earn. These sums are gross earnings, with full employment. There are deductions amounting to about 2*s.* a week, and full employment for a whole year is rare. In the course of his examination, Edward Sunderland handed in a statement of the earnings of a considerable number of weavers, and the time each was unemployed. The highest gross earnings are stated at 17*s.* 6*d.* per week, the lowest 6*s.*, but the greatest number of cases range from 10*s.* to 12*s.* The statement being for 1837, a period of unusual depression, but few will be found who were not 10 or 12 weeks unemployed, whilst some had scarcely any work during the whole year.

The stuff weavers of Leeds consist of two-thirds Irish, and the remainder English and Scotch. They inhabit a quarter of the town called the Bank, from its proximity to the river. This quarter of the town is wholly unprovided with drains, and a more filthy spot I never saw. The whole population, with very few exceptions, live in the midst of filth and offensive effluvia; and even if the builder of a house should desire to construct a drain, the absence of sewers would render it impracticable.

I visited a great number of the houses and cellars of the weavers, accompanied by Mr. Samuel Maud, whose evidence I have quoted, and great indeed was the misery and wretchedness I then witnessed. The consequence of two-thirds of the stuff weavers being Irish, is, that they have given a tone to the whole body of the weavers. Where they are a small minority, they receive their tone from the persons by whom they are surrounded, and their habits are improved; but where they are a majority, they banish providence, temperance and quiet from the neighbourhood in which they reside.

Many of the cellars I visited were completely destitute of any single thing which could be called furniture. The floors were mostly of stone, and were not unfrequently wet and filthy. In some cases these cellars opened into a small area, used only as a receptacle for filth. In some of these wretched tenements there was not even a bedstead, a rug received from the Benevolent Society, and a liftle straw in one corner forming the only resting place of the whole family. In others, to a miserable bed would be added two or three stools, and a rude table; yet some of the men who rented the cellars, were earning wages low indeed, but on which, nevertheless, a weaver of the neighbourhood of Bradford would keep up a creditable appearance. I have described an extreme, but, I am grieved to say, not a solitary case.

There are two evils consequent on the rags and filth of the children of a large number of the Irish weavers of the Bank: they cannot resort to the Sunday-schools, and they cannot get employment to aid their parents.

It is gratifying, however, to be able to state, that those whose experience extends over a series of years, can discover improved habits in this apparently unfertile soil. The evidence of Samuel Maud on these points merits attention :—

"15. Do you consider the habits of the stuff weavers of the Bank (chiefly Irish) lead to augment that distress?—Certainly. There are English among them; but the majority, I think, may be said to be Irish, and their habits are not good. It would greatly tend to alleviate periods of distress, if their habits could be raised.

"16. Does

* It was three weeks since he had woven. He was then warping for Mr. James Green.

"16. Does intoxication prevail much?—I fear it does. I should wish to give my opinion, that more provident habits would take away half their distress at times.

"17. Can you discover any improvement?—I think there is; I think with due zeal on the part of others, improvement might be produced; it is chiefly with the children that we ought to operate.

"18. Do the parents evince much desire to send their children to school?—There is on the part of many; but if all had the desire, there would not be schools enough.

"19. Are there many complaints of embezzlement, or dishonesty, on the part of the stuff weavers?—There have been many complaints, but *they are fewer now.* When men have to work for 7 *s.* to 14 *s.* a week, and frequently four months in the year without work, embezzlement will necessarily take place."

I now come to the past condition of the worsted weavers; and here it will be found that precisely the same feature is exhibited as I had occasion to point out in the case of the cloth manufacture, namely, that up to the year 1801, 1802, or 1803, wages were fully as low, or even rather lower than they are at the present moment; that about that time wages began to advance, and were kept up for about a dozen years, and that they began to decline in 1815, and have continued to decline ever since.

In proof of this, I quote a written statement put in by Mr. John Milner, a respectable manufacturer, who was bred a weaver. It is a record of his own experience for 40 years, and is a complete history of weaving for the period; it is told in quaint language, but is not the less valuable on that account:—

"In order the more clearly to convey my ideas in showing the rise and fall of weaving wages, according to the view I take of it, I shall compare worsted-stuff weaving to a main line, or high road, which extends itself over a hill. It is now about 39 years since I began to be a weaver. At that time ribbed calimancoes were the main line. They were made of hand-spun yarn, and we had 5 *s.* for weaving about 64 hanks into a piece.* I had one piece a week set for my work. My father, who was one of the swiftest weavers in the township of Clayton, used sometimes to weave two pieces a week, which was earning 10 *s.* a week, but this he could not do regularly. Soon after this time cotton-weaving was introduced into this part of the country, and weavers' wages began to advance. At this time (1799 or 1800) a new era commenced in the stuff trade. Mill-yarn, or yarn spun by machinery, was introduced, and many improvements took place in weaving, such as the fly-shuttle. So great was the improvement at that day, that, instead of being able to weave only one 5 *s.* piece in a week, in three or four years I could, and did, frequently weave three and four pieces in a week, at 4 *s.* 3 *d.* each, and that for no other person than the present Mr. Richard Fawcett. I recollect many times weaving a piece in one day. In 1814, I began to weave for Mr. Ackroyd, of Old-lane, Halifax. A three-quarters (25 inches) plain back, 50 set, 84 hanks, was then 11 *s.* 6 *d.* a piece. About the beginning of 1815, wages were lowered 1 *s.* a piece. During the summer of that year, when the wage was 10 *s.* 6 *d.*, I could, and sometimes did, weave three pieces in a week. These goods were then the high road, or main line, and the 11 *s.* 6 *d.* was the summit of the hill. Since that time, it is my opinion, wages have been on the decline. I do not mean to say that good wages have not been given for weaving since that time; for many new things, or fresh kinds of goods have been introduced, which I call branches out of the main line. In the above year, or beginning of 1816, I began weaving spotted plainbacks for Mr. Ackroyd, and did frequently weave one piece in two days, for which I had 14 *s.* 6 *d.*, but these were of very short duration. We have had other branches, such as dobbies, damasks, lastings, &c., for which very good wages were given at first, but these in a few months or years verged

* This statement is confirmed by Joseph Smith, aged 72; he says, "When I was about 21 years of age, I had 5 *s.* a piece for weaving calimancoes; I could then weave two pieces in the week." Ten shillings a week may therefore be taken as the wages of a good weaver for some years previous to 1800.

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verged back again into the main line, and the weaver generally, if not always, found himself at a lower point than the one from which he branched out. In 1819 I engaged with Mr. Ackroyd to take in his goods from the weavers. From 1815 to that time several reductions had taken place. In 1821 or 1822 we had several branches out of the main line. Lastings were one of those branches, for which I paid 24 *s.* for a six in the reed till 1824 (about two years), when we pulled off 2 *s.*, and continued to pull off 1 *s.* a time till I paid the very same weavers for the same quality of goods 11 *s.*; this was about 1828, when we gave over making by hand. Those masters who have continued to make them are now paying 8 *s.* to 9 *s.* But here I would observe they are readier to work by at least 3 *s.* a piece. Damasks were another branch, for which I paid at first 36 *s.*; now they are 15 *s.* for the same quality. In 1835 we had another branch of figured goods, for which we paid 2 *s.* a score. For 50 sets, 16 score hanks, we gave 32 *s.*; now they are 1 *s.* a score. In 1835 for those goods in the old line, we paid for 50 sets, 15 score hanks, 15 *s.* 6 *d.*, being little better than 1 *s.* a score, so that the figured goods have come down in wages to where the old line then was; yet the old line has sunk to 9 *d.* a score. So that all these branches have verged and are verging towards the high road; but this will appear more clearly by the subjoined list of wages from 1831 to 1838. But as I left Mr. Ackroyd in 1831, and came to Bradford and began to manufacture for myself in conjunction with a partner, I have only access to those books which I have kept since that time. I have therefore taken a statement of the lowest and the best qualities, as these are the only two sorts we have continued to make from 1831 to 1838. I think that this list, together with what I have stated above, will go to prove that wages began to advance in 1800, went on till 1815, and since that time they have been on the decline, though we have had several intervals of relief, sometimes with fresh branches, at other times by an extra demand, yet we have nearly got to the starting-place of 1800. To show this, I have taken an average of the earnings of three weavers; namely,

S. C. from the 29th December 1837, to 28th Sept. 1838, 34 pieces, at 12 *s.* 6 *d.*, 21 *l.* 5 *s.*, averaging 11 *s.* per week.

M. W. from 26th Dec. 1837, to 7th August 1838, 29 pieces, at 12 *s.* 6 *d.*, 18 *l.* 2 *s.* 6 *d.*, averaging 11 *s.* 6 *d.* per week.

J. M. from 22d Dec. 1837, to 7th Sept. 1838, 37 pieces, at 9 *s.* 6 *d.*, 17 *l.* 11 *s.* 6 *d.*; and 9 pieces, at 8 *s.*, 3 *l.* 12 *s.*; averaging 11 *s.* 6 *d.* per week.

"The first two sorts are 50 set, 15 score hanks, at 12 *s.* 6 *d.* a piece; the third sort is 46 set, 13 score 10 hanks, at 9 *s.* 6 *d.* a piece; and the fourth sort is 46 set, 12 score hanks, at 8 *s.* a piece. I have taken these at the lowest point of wages, and in order to give a fair statement. I have not taken or selected these three as the best or stoutest workmen. J. M. is my father, who, I have before stated, could not earn more than 10 *s.* per week in 1800, and he is now about 72 years of age. It therefore plainly appears we have got nearly to the place from whence we set out in 1800, and if wages continue to come down, we shall in a very little time be at that point."

From the above lucid statement, the earnings of a good weaver in the years 1800, 1804, 1814, and 1815, may be learned. The list of wages between 1831 and 1838 will be given presently; but before bringing the whole under one view, it may be well to supply the break between 1815 and 1831, as accurately as the statements of the several witnesses will permit.

George Brown stated, that 14 years since (1824), he could earn 21 *s.* per week, and frequently did so.

Benjamin Sowden stated, that in 1829 he had 20 *s.* for a 48 set, and 14 score, and that he could weave a piece in a week.

Joseph Brook stated, that in 1820 he could earn 21 *s.* per week "with ease."

The above witnesses are brought forward because the years to which they refer form a connected chain between Mr. Milner's statement and his Table about to be given, and because they are first-rate workmen, and therefore are fit to be associated with Mr. Milner and the weavers whose earnings he states. The Table from 1831, contains the price for a description of goods

goods which would also require a weaver of first-rate skill and diligence to weave.

STATEMENT of a Week's Gross Earnings of a skilful and diligent Worsted Weaver, from 1787 to 1838.

YEAR.	Authority.	Description of Work.	Week's Earnings. £. s. d.	
1787	Joseph Smith	Calimancoes	– 10 –	All these sums contemplate a hard week's work. It cannot now be ascertained to what casualties the weaver was formerly subject.
1800	John Milner	ditto	– 10 –	
1804	ditto	ditto	– 17 –	
1814	ditto	Plainbacks, 3 pieces, at 11 *s.* 6 *d.*	1 14 6	
1815	ditto	Plainbacks, 3 pieces, at 10 *s.* 6 *d.*	1 11 6	
1820	Joseph Brook	Plainbacks	1 1 –	
1822	John Milner	Lastings	1 4 –	
1824	George Brown	Plainbacks	1 1 –	
1829	Benjamin Sowden	ditto	1 – –	
1831	John Milner	ditto 50 set, 15 score	– 18 –	
1833	ditto	ditto	– 17 –	
1834	ditto	ditto	– 16 –	
1835	ditto	ditto	– 15 6	
1836	ditto	ditto	– 15 6	
1837	ditto	ditto	– 14 –	
1838	ditto	ditto	– 12 6*	

The Tables which have been given of the prices of the various articles of consumption from 1800 to the present time, must be applied to the statement of earnings just given, when it will be found that large corrections must be made before the real earnings of one period can be compared with those of another. To take the two extremes as a sample:

	Wheat.	Flesh.
In 1800 a week's wages would purchase	.71 bush.	17 ½ lbs.
In 1837 „ „ „	1·64 „	34 „

showing that the weaver's 10 *s.* in 1800 was, in reality, no more than 6 *s.* 3 *d.* would be in 1837. On so much of the weaver's income as he might expend in butter, cheese, salt, candles, &c., there would be a saving varying from 40 to 50 per cent.

In 1814 and 1815 it happened that wheat was rather less dear, but every other article was at its height. After 1815 the best wheat continued over 100 *s.* until 1819.† Adding to these considerations the comparative high prices of all kinds of clothing during the period of the highest money-wages, it may safely be concluded that the 34 *s.* 6 *d.* of 1814 was not equal to 20 *s.*, and perhaps not more than equal to 18 *s.* at the present day. But, with all these corrections, it will still appear there is a real decline of wages compared with the earnings of 1814, to the extent of at least one-third, that is, supposing the constancy of employment to have been equal then and now.

IT is now my province, first, to investigate the causes which have contributed, not merely to produce a low condition of the hand-loom weavers, but to prevent the

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* The same feature of low wages in the early part of this century; then an advance and a period of better wages, followed by a subsequent decline, is also exhibited in the cotton manufacture, the only difference being, that the period of low wages continued until 1808. I have now before me a Report, with Minutes of Evidence, ordered, by The House of Commons, to be printed 12 April 1808 (No. 177), in which it is shown that 18 *s.* was the price paid for weaving a 70 reed muslin; that the deductions were 6 *s.* 6 *d.*; that the piece would take a fortnight to weave, working 12 hours a day; and that consequently *the net wages would be only* 5 *s.* 9 *d. a week.* Wages had been much higher, but at that time the cotton weavers were represented as *starving*. At the present day, the wages of good weavers will be above 6 *s.*; and, considering the reduced prices of every article of consumption, bad as his condition unhappily is, and desirable as it unquestionably is that it be improved, it is beyond a doubt much better than it was at the date of the above Report.

† Tooke's History of Prices. English wheat, highest price, 1816, 134/; 1817, 135/; 1818, 100/; 1819, 80/; 1820, 85/.

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the existence of a higher condition; and, second, to ascertain how far the evils under which the weavers are suffering, can be remedied by legislative enactment. I thus state the case, because I conceive that if it could be shown that the weavers were always in a low condition, they would still be entitled to all the benefit the Legislature is competent to confer upon them, without endangering the welfare of the whole community. In the course of this investigation, it will be necessary to examine the various causes assigned and remedies suggested by the hand-loom weavers themselves.

The following are the causes assigned by the weavers themselves as being in their opinion sufficient to have produced the present depressed condition:—

The corn-laws.
Taxes on the raw materials of manufacture.
Excessive taxation, and its unequal pressure.
The use of machinery—the unrestrained use, &c.
Competition of masters to depress wages.

The remedies proposed, of course, correspond with the causes assigned. They are,—

Repeal of the corn-laws.
Repeal of taxes on the raw material.
Reduction of taxation, especially of such taxes as press upon the industrious classes.
A tax on machinery
A restriction on the use of machinery (that is, a 10 hours' Bill).
Boards of trade for the equalization of wages;—

and, not immediately corresponding with assigned causes of depression,

A property tax.
National education.

It must not be understood that all the witnesses were agreed as to the relative force of the causes assigned, or the degree of benefit likely to be derived from the remedies proposed. Some witnesses, for instance, were of opinion, that with an unrestricted trade in food, and other raw produce, machinery would be a blessing, instead of a curse; others agreed in condemning machinery as the cause of the continued depression of wages, and yet held the opinion, that to tax it, or restrain its use, would be productive of evil. Some, again, attached the first importance to boards of trade for the regulation of wages; whilst others said, "Give us the repeal of the corn-laws, and a tax on power-looms, and we will settle our differences with our masters ourselves."

Nearly every witness I examined considered the corn-laws as exercising a pernicious influence on the condition of the labouring population, and especially upon that of the hand-loom weavers, and therefore demanded their repeal. A few extracts will show the mode in which they themselves believe the restriction of the importation of food to be injurious.

Charles Fletcher, of Horsforth, thus stated his impressions as to the effects of the corn-laws upon the condition of the hand-loom weavers:—

"17. Have you given any consideration as to the cause?—I have. I attribute the decline, in a considerable degree, to the operation of the corn-laws.

"18. In what way do you consider they have operated?—By preventing the free exchange of our commodities with other countries. They operate peculiarly on the woollen trade in some of the countries on the continent, which have raised up manufactures for themselves.

"19. Is there any other way in which the weaver is affected?—I think the weaver is peculiarly affected, because *the smaller a man's income, the greater the proportion he must spend in bread.* Flour is now (August) 3 *s.* 4 *d.* per stone of 16 lbs.; a man, with a wife and three or four children, must have two stone, or two stone and a-half. Now flour has occasionally been at 2 *s.* a stone, and ought not to be higher—[a voice in the crowd, 'It ought to be 18 *d.*, if we had no corn-laws']—so that you may easily judge of the effect of taxed-bread on our condition."

James

James Cromack, of Armley, gave a similar view as to the operation of the corn-laws:

"30. What do you think are the most prominent causes of the depressed condition of the weavers?—I think it proceeds from more causes than one. First, I should say the corn-laws, because the duty on foreign grain has a tendency to cramp our commerce; and by our not taking foreign produce, it is impossible for them (foreign nations) to take our manufactures. They also cause us to eat our bread dearer than we ought to eat it, and dearer than the people of any other country eat it. In consequence of this, it takes *more of our small earnings to buy food, and leaves so little remaining, that we can purchase but little else.** So that while it depresses our own condition, it makes us depress the condition of all others; it makes us bad customers of all others."

James Whitaker gave his opinion respecting the operation of the corn-laws; as follows:—

"18. Have you any thing to state respecting the cause of the decline of wages beyond what you have already stated?—I think the *corn-laws are the first cause.* My opinion is the same with respect to their effects on commerce as Mr. Cromack stated. I think they are productive of one thing, which he did not mention; I think they have been the means of causing foreign nations to manufacture, who would not otherwise have begun, and thus they have created for us rivals in the market. I think they have been the cause of a great part of the machinery at present in operation. It is acknowledged that our goods can be manufactured by machinery cheaper than by manual labour. In consequence of the introduction of manufactures by foreign nations, our manufacturers were compelled to introduce a system of manufacturing which enabled them to compete with foreigners. I cannot see that the manufacturer could do otherwise; I am stating what many of my fellow-workmen do not agree to, but I come here honestly to state my views. My reasons for stating that the manufacturer could not do in any other way, are these: it is well known that we labour under a debt that no other nation in the world labours under. The interest of this must be paid out of taxation; besides that, we have upwards of twenty million for the expenses of the Government, which must be met by taxation. Now, operatives in Germany and France *can afford to work for less wages, and still live better.* Taking all these things into consideration, I cannot see that our manufacturers could compete with foreigners without introducing a system of manufacturing like the present."

I need not occupy a large space by quoting the opinions of other witnesses on the subject of the corn-laws alone. Nearly all the witnesses considered them injurious, though all were not able to state their views with equal clearness and precision. The above quotations show that the weavers are in the habit of thinking deeply on the subject; and as they do not fail to discuss among themselves all questions bearing upon their own condition, I found them generally very familiar with the leading arguments current upon the subject, and not unfrequently capable of putting their peculiar case in a new and striking point of view. Some of the witnesses taking a view of the corn-laws not less clear than those above quoted, grouped them with taxes on raw produce, and on the raw materials of manufacture, and on the necessaries consumed by the labourer. As a specimen of this larger view of the pressure of taxation upon manufacturing industry, take the following extract from the evidence of Thomas Fawcett, one of the witnesses examined at Bramley:—

"10. Have you any thing you wish to state respecting the depressed condition of the weavers, and its causes?—Yes, I think there are two great monopolies which require revision.

"11. What are they?—The first is the corn-law; I desire its repeal, because it compels us to eat bread 70, 80, 90 and, in some cases, 100 per cent. dearer† than

* The effect of a high price of food in destroying the home market is too frequently overlooked. The manufacturing population are the great consumers of manufactured goods; an advance in the price of food utterly destroys their power of purchasing manufactures. They clothe themselves when bread is cheap

† The witness over-estimates the evil, but this is no more than a common error. We must not expect a weaver to be *more* accurate than those who have better opportunities of learning the truth.

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than in France, Germany and other countries. The corn-laws force the cultivation of soils ill-adapted to the cultivation of wheat, whilst they throw land out of cultivation in other countries which could grow corn more advantageously than we can. By abolishing the corn-laws, the Germans and other northern nations could supply us with cheaper bread than we can ourselves produce under present circumstances, whilst we could supply them with manufactured goods cheaper than they could make them; so that they could be better employed in growing corn for us, and we in manufacturing for them, and thus raise up a mutual interest in each others welfare by mutual intercourse.

"Then there is the sugar monopoly. The protecting duty * on sugar nearly doubles its price, and is calculated to take from the pockets of the people three millions and a half annually, and yet produces comparatively nothing † to the State, but goes into the pockets of the West India slave-owner.

"There are other duties which deeply affect the condition of the people, and especially of the weavers. There is a duty of 3 ¾ per cwt. on foreign cattle: ‡ my opinion is, that all duties on food are injurious to us, and cruel in the extreme.

"Another class of duties I shall mention, are duties on the raw material; on olive oil, for instance, the duty is 8 *l.* 8 *s.* per tun.† This causes our manufacturers to use the worst oil from Spain. The duty on wool is 1 *d.* per lb. on the best, and one-halfpenny on the common sorts (on all under 1 *s.* only a small proportion), and on every article used in manufactures some duty is raised, so as to add considerably to the price of cloth. It is our ignorance only which allows the Government to raise such heavy and indirect taxes."

Having thus stated his opinion respecting the claims of the weavers to a repeal of those taxes which press upon industry, he continued as follows:—

"I earnestly entreat you, sir, to press upon the attention of Government, and the Legislature the necessity of a national system of education; while this is withheld, it is cruel to taunt us with our ignorance."

Abraham Worsnop, of Wortley, stated the quantity of wool worked up in a given quantity of cloth. "I would point out," said he, "one item, taxation of the raw material, that is, on foreign wool, which must be considerable, when it takes about three stone of wool (48 lbs.) to make 23 or 24 yards of cloth, and then there are the taxes on dyes, and so forth, which are calculated to impede commerce."

Mr. Jonathan Hodgson, a cloth manufacturer, of the township of Idle, gave his opinion as follows:—

"4. Have you any thing to suggest for the improvement of the weaving body? —I consider nothing can improve the condition but an increased demand for labour, and that I think would be brought about *by a repeal of the corn-laws, and all taxes on raw materials, and all the necessaries of life.* I am a sincere friend to free trade, and I consider the duty on Baltic timber particularly oppressive and burthensome on trade generally. The duties on wool, indigo and other dye-stuffs, oil, &c. press particularly on the woollen manufacture, and by limiting demand on the hand-loom weaver."

Among the worsted weavers around Bradford, the opinion as to the expediency of the repeal of the corn-laws is not universal. Some few of the witnesses thought it would require a minimum of wages to be fixed, otherwise wages would fall in proportion to the decline in the price of wheat. One witness, William Rouse, of Bowling, apprehended an influx of agricultural labourers: "I think," said he, "the repeal of the corn-laws would throw the farm labourer out of employment; he must seek refuge in the manufacturing districts, and would compete

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* The protecting duty is 39 *s.* per cwt., that is the difference between 3 *l.* 3 *s.*, the duty of foreign sugar, and 24 *s.* the duty on British plantation.

† Sugar imported in 1835:—

	Cwt.	Duty.
From British America	3,524,209	24/
From Mauritius	558,712	24/
From the East Indies	137,975	24/
All Foreign Countries	227,371	63/

‡ The duty on provisions varies from 12 *s.* to 28 *s.* per cwt.

§ From Naples and Sicily, 8 *l.* 8 *s.*; other places, 4 *l.* 4 *s.*; in foreign ships, 10 *l.* 10 *s.*

compete in the labour market with his fellow labourers. An unlimited speculation in the manufacturing districts would ensure, in anticipation of foreign demand, the facilities of production would be augmented *ad infinitum*. Then we should be dependent on the foreigner for the first necessaries of existence, and he would raise the price in proportion." One other witness, Samuel Sowden, of Manningham, was of the same opinion.

The opinion that machinery stands foremost among the causes of low wages, prevails almost universally among both the cloth and stuff weavers of the West Riding of Yorkshire. By machinery must be understood the spinning mule, used in the cloth manufacture, and the power-loom, used both in the cloth and stuff manufacture.

Though but little doubt existed in the minds of the witnesses as to the operation of machinery, and especially of the power-loom, in producing a decline of wages, by limiting the demand for hand-labour, there was a very great difference of opinion as to the value of a tax or of restriction as a remedy; some of the witnesses being of opinion that the effect of a tax would merely be to destroy just so much trade as the machine now maintains. On these points, however, it is best to let the witnesses speak for themselves.

Joseph Best, the first witness I examined at Leeds, whose evidence (always clearly and candidly given) I have frequently had occasion to quote, stated his opinion in very few words.

"39. Having stated that wages have been much reduced, to what cause or causes do you attribute such reduction?—I attribute it to an overplus of machinery. I consider the mule a great injury; with one man and two boys or girls as much spinning can be done as with five men; I consider I am under the mark. This throws four men out of employ, and they come upon the hand-loom.* The power-looms I also consider injurious; one man will *tune* or keep in order 20 or 30 looms, and then it requires only one woman to each loom."

The next witness, John Hutton, a worsted weaver, of Leeds, was of a different opinion:—

"4. Will you state what you deem likely to improve the condition of the weavers?—I used to think a tax on machinery would improve our condition, but I think differently now; I think if machinery were taxed without restriction upon the hours of running, the owners of machinery would add to the poor man's labour, and so make the poor man pay the tax. I should not wish to see a tax on machinery, but should wish a restriction as to the time of labouring in the factory."†

Abraham Worsnop, of Wortley, whilst he stated his conviction of the injury sustained by the hand-loom weavers, doubted the policy of a tax. Alluding to the opinion expressed by James Whitaker, respecting the operation of the corn-laws in promoting the introduction of machinery, by raising wages, without really benefiting the weaver, he said, "I do not know how far the last witness is correct in stating that the manufacturers had been compelled to adopt mules and power-looms. I am of opinion that, on account of the ingenuity of man, and his desire to accomplish great things, machinery would make progress without there being a necessity. So that, although I admit it has done us injury, I do not see that to stop it could better our condition; because we are prevented having foreign wheat, and to stop our trade, would make our condition still worse. For if our manufacturers were not allowed to use these machines, they would make the same machines for foreigners, and thus the foreigners would be enabled to manufacture goods cheaper than we could find them. A fact I saw in the paper strengthened me in this opinion, namely, that the Germans could make cutlery 25 per cent. cheaper than we can; so that, in my opinion, any benefit which the operatives supposed they might derive from the stoppage of machinery would

* A cloth weaver who knows his business can both spin and weave. Almost every weaver is a jenny spinner.

† Joseph Brook, of Horton, near Bradford, thus stated his view respecting short hours:—

"I wish to mention the long hours in factories. I consider the hours in a factory are far too long to enable the hand-loom weaver to compete with machinery. If the hours were limited to ten hours a day, it would operate as a restrictive tax; and I am confident that ten hours are sufficiently long for man, woman or child to labour in a factory. I am myself for eight hours; but ten I think the utmost they should ever be permitted to labour."

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would be lost in the want of trade, unless the corn-laws and taxes on raw produce were repealed, which I consider as at the root of all the evil."

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Among the worsted weavers about Bradford the power-loom is very generally regarded as one of the principal causes of their depressed condition, the mode of its operation being stated to be *reducing the demand for manual labour, whilst the supply continued the same.* It is, however, unnecessary to heap quotation upon quotation, I shall therefore pass to the next subject of complaint, with its remedy, namely, the unequal wages paid for work precisely similar, and boards of trade for the equalization of wages. It is among the stuff weavers that this proposal chiefly finds favour; among the cloth weavers much less importance is attached to it.

The fact that different wages are given by different employers for similar work in the case of the cloth trade has already been shown*; its existence in the worsted trade is shown in the Tables appended to the evidence of Joseph Brook, of Little Horton, who stated the proposed remedy as follows:—

"49. You stated in your last examination that you considered the repeal of the corn-laws would be of no avail permanently without a minimum of wages were fixed; will you explain your views on that subject?—I should propose that an Act should be passed making it lawful for a certain number of masters and men to meet together and fix the rate of wages.

"50. On what principle?—I would have the rate fixed in this way, that any number of masters who did rather more than half the trade, should meet a number of workmen, to be elected by the workmen themselves; and whatever rate of wages the parties should agree to, should be binding on the whole, and that the Legislature should impose penalties on those who violated the Act.

"51. Would you have that board meet periodically to revise the statement?—Yes, once a quarter.

"52. What do you think the precise effect of such a regulation?—I think the effect would be to compel those in the trade, who would take every advantage of a working man, and whom I consider no better than robbers, to give the same wages as other manufacturers.

"53. Would such a rate so fixed be somewhat below the highest rate?—Perhaps it might; but I think the rate so fixed would be generally the highest rate taken as a minimum. It would still leave to the good workman the advantage of his skill and industry. I do not mean to equalize between good and bad workmen.

"54. Would it not be easy to evade such a regulation as that?—I do not think there would be much evasion; I think the workmen would give information of violations of the Act, and dare the consequences. I think, moreover, that the manufacturers generally would find it to their interest to keep the regulation. The benefit of such a regulation would operate thus: at the present time, in a bad time of trade, some manufacturers reduce their wages: some refuse to do so, sometimes from sympathy, and sometimes from honour. Eventually, however, they are compelled to reduce, to meet their neighbours, that reduction only bringing them to a level with others; yet those who had previously reduced, again reduce, and reduction becomes general, where it ought to have been partial."

"55. Would it not be possible, by means of a receipt for money, alleged to have been advanced, to evade the law?—I do not think a workman would be so base as to accept of such a condition.

"56. You would hardly call a workman base, whose necessities compelled him to agree to such a condition?—I consider that in such a case the workmen would protect each other.

"57. Has not something of the kind been attempted?—In 1822 and 1823 Mr. Thompson, Mr. Fawcett, and others, attempted to induce the manufacturers to come to an agreement all to give the same wages, but they could not effect it.

"58. Is it a scheme to which the manufacturers who actually give the highest wages would be likely to agree?—I think it is. I have often heard manufacturers say, that it mattered not to them what wages they gave, so that all gave alike.

"59. The plan you propose does not contemplate a remedy for a decline of wages from any of the causes in operation?—No. It only would tend to keep wages

* See the Table at page 26, *note*.

wages from going below the fixed rate for three months; if wages advanced, it would not prevent any one taking higher wages."

"60. So that if any plans were in operation to reduce wages generally, you would have them subject to reduction every three months?—Certainly."

The only modification of the above plan suggested by other witnesses was, that the periodical meetings should be at shorter intervals than three months—every month, for instance. It should be observed, that the establishment of boards of trade are only part of a set of remedies proposed by Joseph Brook; his whole proposal embraced "a tax upon property, and a total repeal of the corn-laws, but with this proviso, that Parliament should provide a protection to prevent any reduction of wages, without the consent of master and man."*

"46. In proposing a tax on property, you would desire no additional tax on machinery?—No, I mean a tax on all property, which should include machinery. By property I mean to include incomes beyond a certain extent: I have thought of about 100*l.* as the income, below which the tax should not go; and as the income increased, I should extend the tax.

"47. Would you make any distinction between property and income?—No, I think not; but it is a point I have not studied."

In the above selections I have endeavoured to give a faithful view of the opinions of the hand-loom weavers themselves, delivered, be it remembered, in open court, before hundreds of their fellow workmen, on the most prominent causes of, and the most effectual remedies for, low wages. In the course of the examinations, many circumstances were stated, many admissions made, tending to affect some of the conclusions; but in the above exposition I have thought proper to abstain from quoting a single sentence beyond the mere opinions which the witnesses desired to record respecting the causes of and remedies for their depressed condition. In the course, however, of the brief examination upon which I am about to enter, and with which my Report will conclude, I shall freely avail myself of all the evidence in my possession.

If we examine the whole period over which the evidence extends, we shall find that, with the exception of the short period of advancing wages already described, the hand-loom weavers have been at all times subject to numerous causes of undue increase, which, without machinery as well as with machinery, without corn-laws as well as with them, have kept their condition low.

Besides the mere increase of their own numbers from procreation, hand-loom weaving has been the refuge of the surplus numbers from nearly all other trades. Whilst all, or nearly all, other trades have regulations to protect themselves from an undue increase of numbers *from external causes*, hand-loom weaving has been open to all comers. Many trades have regulations or customs which have the effect of limiting the number of apprentices, among which, charging a premium is conspicuous; not only have the hand-loom weavers no such regulations, not only do they never dream of a premium, but they have all along held out, and to a certain extent do still hold out, a bribe in the shape of wages to children who will come amongst them.†

In the case of the cloth manufacture, the mode of paying lads, and the division of the profit between the small manufacturer and the parent, so as to afford an inducement to both, has been already explained. In the case of the worsted trade, the custom formerly prevailed to a most vicious extent, and it was greatly facilitated by the lightness of the labour, and the short time requisite for acquiring it. During the short period of high wages, every man who was provident enough to save a few pounds, purchased an extra loom, and set a child, or a man, or woman, from some other employment, in which work was not to be had at the time, to work upon it; in this way the number of hand-loom weavers was increased beyond the natural increase of their own numbers. Hand-loom weaving, in short, has been, and is, a receptacle for the destitute from all other classes; and the great, the really appalling evil is, that the labour of the parent once

* This is the plan detailed above.

† In trades requiring considerable skill, the skill itself has the effect of limiting numbers. Even in skilled trades, not one man in ten is a good workman, not one in twenty a really clever workman. The necessity of acquiring skill keeps more out of a trade than all schemes of exclusion; skill requires time for its acquisition, and that is a powerful cause of limitation.

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once transferred to the child, what is found to be child's work, comes to be rewarded with child's wages.

The great facility of acquiring the art of weaving, the encouragement given to parents to have their children taught, and the self-protecting rules adopted by most other trades, have tended to keep the weaving business over-stocked with hands. This will account for the fact, that wages were low and declining at a time when all the other assigned causes of depression were absent. To this cause must we also attribute the fact, that wages began to decline before any machinery was introduced. This undue increase of numbers, and its effect on wages, will be found to be admitted by several of the witnesses, especially when endeavouring to account for the fact just mentioned relative to the decline of wages previous to the introduction of machinery.

Joseph Best, alluding to the practice of taking apprentices, said, "We are compelled to bring up our children to our trade, because we cannot afford the premiums demanded in other trades. I myself was asked 70*l.* premium by a wool-sorter, to take one of my sons; all other trades are over-stocked; we have no other resource but our own trade, and *we breed sadly too many* on that ground.

"31. Do not other trades unite, so as to prevent new hands coming in?—They do; but masters make sad inroads into all their regulations. There is a sad redundancy of hands altogether, and masters do what they please.

"32. I believe the weavers are not united?—They have been united, but the masters have broken up the unions, and the men are now adrift; we have now nothing to protect us; the masters stood out against us, and were too strong, and the men had to submit for want of something to eat."

Joseph Cromack, of Armley, gave evidence as to the decline of wages before the introduction of either the mule or the power-loom, and at the same time admitted the excess of weavers:—

"16. When did the manufacturers begin to improve the fineness of the cloth, and therefore to require an increase in the weight and fineness of the weft?—About the year 1819.

"17. At first did wages advance in proportion?—No they did not advance in proportion to the increase of work.

"18. Did not the weavers make a demand for an increase of wages in consequence of an increase of work?—Yes, continually, but they were not successful.*

"19. Could you not protect yourselves, by refusing the work?—No; if I refused, the master would get some one else.

"20. Then there was always a full supply of weavers?—No, not always; there was sometimes full employment.

"21. But not employment enough to make refusal of work safe?—No.

"28. Were there more or fewer looms 20 years ago?—Fewer; but nothing correct can be ascertained here or in any township. There are certainly twice as many now as 20 years ago. You may safely put down that (some voices here exclaimed 'Aye, three times as many.') There are some masters now in Armley who employ as many weavers as the whole number in the township 25 or 30 years since."

James

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* Up to 1813, skilled labour rose considerably in London, in proof of which fact I am indebted to my friend Mr. Place for the following statement:—

"Wages in London.

"Tailors.	Weekly.	Printers (Compositors).	Weekly.
1777 to 1795	21/9	1777 to 1796	24/
1795	25/	1796	27/
1800	27/	1800	30/
1807	30/	1805	36/
1810	33/	1813	33/
1813	36/		

at which they have ever since remained. | at this sum they remained several years, and, I believe, are so now.

"Carpenters, smiths, cabinet-makers, &c., shoemakers, hatters, &c., rose in nearly the same proportion." Applying the tables of prices to the wages of 1815, it will be found that money wages continuing the same, is equivalent to an advance in real wages of nearly, perhaps quite, 75 per cent.

James Whitaker, of Armley, a very intelligent man, had heard it elicited in evidence that wages declined in 1818 or 1819, and that the mule was not introduced until 1824 or 1825, whilst the power-loom was unknown to the cloth manufacture until 1832; hence he saw the necessity of explaining so much of the decline as took place previous to the introduction of the new machinery. This will account for the turn given to his testimony, as exhibited in the following extracts:—

"8. Now to what do you attribute the decline of wages?—Before the introduction of mules and power-looms, our wages declined from an increase of work for the same price. * * *

"9. This (alluding to an explanation which I have omitted as unnecessary, having been already given), may serve to account for, or rather to explain, the increase of labour; but it leaves unaccounted for the fact, that wages did not advance in proportion. Why was the weaver, in his contract with his master, unable to raise the price of his labour?—Wages did at first rise, but not at all equal to the increased labour.

"10. Then still is the fact unaccounted for?—Yes; suppose you had a wife and five children, another man with only one could afford to take the work for less. There are always men enough to take the work for less. I have never known a period when there were not a sufficient number of hands, except in the years 1824 and 1825, before the panic, when there was a great deal of work and full employment.

"11. So that there has always been a sufficient supply of weavers to enable the masters to do as they pleased?—Yes, with the exception of 1824 and 1825; I never knew a period when it was not so.

"12. Being sensible of this state of the weaving trade, do the weavers generally endeavour to put their children out?—I should think in our town there are at least 20 boys from 12 to 15, who have been put with mechanics; so that you see from this, that the weavers are most anxious to have their children away from that calling.

"13. Do they find difficulty in accomplishing this?—I cannot say, but I believe they do. There is a system amongst mechanics which creates difficulty: some of them will not take a boy unless they have a premium. It is mostly 10*l.*, and that places a barrier in the way of most of the weavers."

Abraham Worsnop, of Wortley, was also sensible of the effect of numbers in reducing wages:—

"16. Are there any other causes (in addition to those he had enumerated)?—I think that masters can lower wages at their discretion.

"17. Do you think that if there were fewer weavers in proportion to the work to be done, that masters could then lower wages at their discretion?—No.

"18. Then the power of the masters over the men, and their control over wages, arises entirely from the competition of the men?—Certainly."

In every clothing township I visited, similar statements were made of the increased number of looms, of the former practice of taking apprentices or children to teach, and of the existing impediments in the way of placing children out. The effect of numbers upon wages was, as the above extracts will show, perceived by many; but in the exclusive attention which the witnesses had directed towards the corn-laws and machinery, the undue increase of numbers, although not wholly lost sight of, was not specifically assigned as one of the causes of their depressed condition.

Here, then, we have a cause which was in active operation at times when none of the other assigned causes were in existence. This cause is sufficient to account for the low wages of 1800. It also explains why, when an increase of wages was obtained in 1814, it could not be maintained; why wages began to decline at least five years before the introduction of the machines complained of. It would have been sufficient, if permitted to operate without check, to have continued the depression of wages without aid from other causes, and so it must invariably operate, breaking down every favourable circumstance, and reducing the labourers' remuneration to the very lowest rate capable of supporting existence, and of enabling them to continue the race.

It will be found universally, that in trades where the men permit women and children to work, and the employment is one in which a child can do a man's work, child's wages prevail; and that where the men have opposed the employment

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ment of women and children, by not permitting their own family to work, or where the work is of such a nature that neither women nor children can perform it, their own wages have kept up to a point equal to the maintenance of a family. The tailors of London have in this way not merely *kept up*, but have *forced up** their wages, though it is an occupation better adapted to women than weaving, where women are employed in some branches of the trade, and wherein the tendency to employ them is therefore much more difficult, indeed impossible wholly to resist. In a tract, intituled, "Hand-loom Weavers and Factory Workers: a Letter to James Turner, Cotton-spinner, from Francis Place," it is shown that,

When the weavers in Lancashire were earning	s.	d.	the tailors in London were earning	s.	d.
- - -	36	–	- -	18	6
Ditto - ditto -	28	–	Ditto - ditto -	21	9
Ditto - ditto -	7	6	Ditto - ditto -	36	–

But this is an evil which the Legislature cannot reach, at least not directly. Over the children employed in factories the Legislature may exercise an increased control, but it cannot step in, and prevent the weaver teaching his own child, or the child of another, to weave in his own cottage. Nothing, in short, can check the practice, until it is deemed disgraceful by the men themselves; and this feeling will be gradually brought about by controlling the labour of children in factories. Disgrace attached to the employment of children in factories under certain circumstances (such as age, duration of labour, species of labour), will be followed by similar disgrace attached to the employment of children in private under similar circumstances; and when this feeling is generated, the evil will diminish. The chief authors of this kind of improvement must, however, be the working classes themselves. The Legislature may make a vast number of improvements in removing restrictions from trade, in lightening the pressure of taxation, and so promote the accumulation of capital, and improve the *demand* for labour; but as regards the *supply* of labour, it is the labourers alone who have any control over it. If they raise up large families—if any one class, like the hand-loom weavers, offers a bribe to people of other classes to send their children to inundate its ranks, and other classes pursue a contrary line of conduct, the result must inevitably be, as already stated, the very lowest rate of wages.

The corn-laws, together with all taxes on raw produce, undoubtedly act injuriously upon the hand-loom weavers, and precisely in the manner pointed out by the witnesses. Any relaxation in the restriction on the importation of food, must therefore be enumerated among the measures calculated to improve the condition of the weavers, by rendering their wages more productive, and by increasing the quantity of employment by the necessary result of the increased activity of manufacturers.

The fear expressed by one of the witnesses respecting the influx of labourers from the field to the loom, is without foundation. In the first place, the diminution in the production of wheat in this country would be exceedingly small. Our soil and climate are good, and our skill great; and on by far the larger portion of our lands we could raise corn as cheap as in any country. The only lands thrown out of cultivation would be such as are forced into cultivation by the law. On the whole of the lands remaining in cultivation there would be a relief of rent, properly so called: nor would the change be all loss to the land-owner, on all that portion of what is called "rent," which is really a profit on capital previously sunk on the land: he would be a gainer.

As the quantity of wheat land thrown out of cultivation would be small, so also would be labourers thrown out of such employment be few. Of these, a large proportion would find employment in the greater activity given to grazing and other farm operations. The rest would be divided among other occupations, choosing, in all cases, the kinds most kindred to their former work, and those which afford the best wages. Here, it must be observed, that the mere supposition of transfer of capital and labour from land to manufactures, supposes a greater productiveness of capital and labour in the latter than in the former; and if it did not, no change would take place in consequence of the repeal. Some labourers might come upon weaving, but the increased demand for weaving would more than equal the increased supply.

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* And this too in the very teeth of an Act of Parliament passed early in the reign of Geo. III. to keep down tailors' wages.

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The taxes on the raw material of the woollen manufacture are so trifling, so unproductive, considered as a source of revenue, that nothing need interfere with their immediate repeal. They were in 1835,—

	£.
On foreign wool	137,000
„ indigo	33,378
„ other dye-stuffs, 19 in number	49,570
„ olive oil	9,400

These sums may seem trifling, but they operate very injuriously upon trade. A piece of cloth of 24 yards will take 48 lbs. of wool, that is, 2 *d.* per yard duty on wool alone, allow 1 *d.* for all other taxes, and 1 *d.* for the accumulation of profits* on these taxes between the time of payment and the sale of the cloth, and we have an additional 4 *d.* per yard. This on a medium cloth is 3 ½ per cent. —a per centage which may often lose the British manufacturer his market.

The duty on Baltic timber is another most pernicious restriction, which has had a considerable effect in destroying the demand† for British manufactured goods in Norway and other countries. We have the most conclusive evidence that the North of Europe would be an extensive customer for our manufactures, in the fact that such was actually the case before we refused to take their only purchase-money,—timber. Mr. Richard Norman gave evidence before the Committee on the timber trade as follows:—

"642. You state that there has been a very great falling off in the Norway trade within the last few years; has that had any considerable effect upon the consumption on the produce of Great Britain in those countries?—A very great effect indeed. When first I entered business, the exports of British manufactures and colonial goods from this country were enormous; they are now comparatively small, though Norway does take, and is disposed to take, every thing she can from England.

"752. Do you consider that an increased importation of Norwegian timber would cause an increased demand in Norway for British manufactures?—I believe that the effect of an increased supply in this country would be a very material increase in the exportation of British manufactures; and I believe, further, that if the trade was put on such a footing as to yield a profitable return to the exporter from Norway, a much more than relative increase in the quantity of goods exported hence into Norway would take place."

From the removal of these and other restrictions on trade, great improvement would undoubtedly take place in the hand-loom weavers' condition, as well as in that of every other class subsisting on wages. The tendency of money-wages would be to rise, whilst the purchasing power of those wages would be improved by the cheapening of the commodities on which wages are expended.

But will such improvement be permanent? Not, certainly, if the causes of the undue increase of population already mentioned be permitted to come into unchecked operation. All that the Legislature can do is, to limit employment as little as possible, by levying taxation in such a manner as to press as lightly as possible upon industry. After this, every thing must depend upon the people themselves. From the demand for labour, it is the business of the Legislature *to remove checks*; on the supply of labour, it is the business of the labourers themselves *to impose checks*.

I come now to the question of machinery, that is, to the project of a tax on the mule and on the power-loom. Here I must remark, that it has been the fate of every improvement to incur the animosity of the labouring population in the first instance; but ultimately every machine in succession has found favour in their sight. This ought not to create surprise. The first apparent effect of a machine is to displace labour, and it is only at a second view that the labourer himself

* The allowance of 1 *d.* for accumulated profits, may seem large on 3 *d.*, but it should be remembered that the duty is paid at the earliest stage of the manufacture, and in every hand through which the article passes a profit must be left: this was perceived by Blackstone, who, writing in 1765, without the guiding light of politico-economical science, said, "The earlier a tax is laid on a commodity, the heavier it falls upon a consumer in the end; for every trader through whose hands it passes must have a profit, not only upon the raw material and his own labour and time in preparing it, but also upon the very tax itself, which he advances to the Government, otherwise he loses the use and interest of the money which he so advances."—*Bl. Com.* vol. 1. 317.

† Besides this effect in which the hand-loom weavers are especially concerned, the loss to the whole nation is 1,500,000 *l.* annually, for the privilege of using bad timber, instead of good.

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himself finds labour generally facilitated, production increased, and fresh labour employed by more than the amount of labour at first displaced. Before the invention of the *picker*, or fly-shuttle, the shuttle was thrown by the hand, as it still is by the carpet weavers; the consequence was, that a wide piece of cloth required two weavers. The picker enabled one man to do the work of two, and this was enough to make it hateful. The inventor, accordingly, was mobbed, and had to escape for his life; but, after a time, it was found that this invention so far increased the cheapness of the article, that consumption became wonderfully augmented, and an increased demand for labour ensued. The picker, instead of throwing half the people out of work, gave better wages to all: the weaver soon learned to cherish the picker.*

Then came the great improvements in spinning, and especially that greatest of all revolutions in machinery, the change from the single spindle-wheel to the sixty-spindle jenny. This was so obvious a *saving* of labour, that it at once assumed to be a *displacing* of labour, and the animosity to the jenny continued long, and was for a time intense; *now* the jenny is called "a necessary machine," to distinguish it from such machines as have not yet proved their own usefulness. In 1715, with the old single-spindle it took 10 spinners to keep one stuff-loom at work; one spinner with the jenny will keep two cloth-looms at work, whilst one mule-spinner will keep, perhaps, 10 looms at work; the throstle, on which worsted is spun, will about do the same. In 1715 spinners in cottages never got more than 6*d.* a day, oftener 4*d.*, whilst the children had 3*d.* To do all the spinning now done by machinery would require some millions of people on the single spindle-wheel. Does it follow that millions are thrown out of work? Certainly not. The obvious answer is, that but for the improved tool—for such is a machine—the work could not be done.

It was entirely owing to the improvements in spinning machinery, and to nothing else, that the great demand for weavers sprung up soon after the year 1800. But for those improvements (by which the price of yarn has been reduced from 40*s.* to 2*s.* 8*d.* per lb.) the cotton manufacture could not have gained the sway it has since enjoyed in this country. To destroy our spinning machinery, or to restrain it by a tax (which, if effectually imposed, would be to destroy it), would clearly be to destroy that which affords the demand for weaver's labour. The jenny spinner is always a weaver; to assume that the mule displaces the labour of four spinners, is to assume, that no more work is done; that cheapness does not stimulate consumption; that no increase of weaving takes place. It must be evident, however, that every cheapening of yarn by means of improved machinery, increases the demand for weaver's labour; and to this cause is it owing that "*the looms in Armley* (and in nearly all other places), *are double what they were* 20 *years ago.*" The population of England has not doubled, or half doubled, in 20 years; and but for improvements in spinning machinery, the increase of looms must have jogged on at an equal pace with the population. The great evil is, that the looms have increased rather too much, that is, in rather a greater ratio than the demand; the weaver, therefore, has a direct interest in the improvement of spinning machinery, although some weavers are spinners also; and although a mere arithmetical calculation would make it appear, that labour is displaced. If the calculation be worth any thing as an argument, it should prove that, but for spinning machinery, England would now give work to millions of spinners. The jenny is called "a necessary machine," because half the truth is seen; every machine in its turn is first hated, and then cherished, because in time it makes manifest its own advantages. The mule is not so great an innovation as the jenny, for it only enables a man to produce four or five-fold, compared with the jenny; whilst the jenny enabled a man to produce at least sixty-fold, compared with the old spinning-wheel. That the dislike to the mule will rapidly fade away, I am quite convinced. A working man is almost always thoroughly honest and sincere in the expression of his opinion, and the weaver is no exception to the rule; he does not discuss for the sake of victory, but because of the great interest he has in discovering the truth: hence, the moment he becomes convinced of the fallacious basis of an opinion, he gives it up without regret. He does not, like the pseudo-

* The picker, like all inventions for facilatating labour, was adopted gradually. It was invented about 1738, but it was not until the year 1800, that it was in very general use. The trade grew with it; so that it really operated as an aid to labour, not as a displacer of labour. This is true of most machines; by cheapening commodities, and extending consumption, they create the very business they perform.

pseudo-philosopher, pin his reputation to an opinion, and then defend it with every ingenuity of argument, until long after all the rest of the world are convinced of its erroneousness. Such being the favourable state of mind of the weavers of Yorkshire, and, it may be added, the industrious classes generally, we may feel certain that the animosity against the mule will share the fate of that which was formerly felt against the jenny. The mule will prove its own indispensable usefulness, not merely to the whole body of the people, but to the weavers themselves, when it will be admitted, and cheerfully admitted, into the class of "necessary machines."

With regard to the power-loom, it should first be observed, that it is in the worsted trade of the West Riding that its adoption has become general. In the cloth manufacture its introduction is recent, and as yet it has made but little progress; we must, however, asume that it will make progress in both manufactures. It must be clearly understood, that, as *a better tool*, it will ultimately take from the hand-loom all the work it is capable of performing; at present, it is not applicable to figured goods, neither does it weave the finest fabrics so well as the hand-loom in skilful hands. We must not, however, expect improvement to stop. There seems to be no reason why the Jacquard engine for weaving figures, should not be applied to the power-loom; or why successive improvements should not render it capable of doing all kinds of work.

The power-loom does not displace labour. In the cloth and worsted manufactures the power-loom requires a pair of hands, as well as the hand-loom. As the power-loom greatly cheapens the articles it produces, the invariable effects of cheapness must follow, namely, increase of consumption, and a better demand for labour. Why, then, is the power-loom complained of? Because hitherto women and girls only have been employed, to the exclusion of men. Here, however, the evil did not commence with the power-loom. The practice of making women and children weave prevailed universally long before power was introduced; the custom is indeed, "as old as the hills." Old as it is, however, it is an evil of incalculable magnitude; but as the power-loom must be worked in a factory, it gives the Legislature a power of exercising its guardianship over children to a greater extent than in the case of the hand-loom. By a series of well-directed efforts, the Legislature, if supported by the men, might work a reform of this really shocking evil, and the effect would be a gradual improvement of men's wages in proportion to the child's and women's labour withdrawn.

A tax, however, is not the way to remedy the evil. If the power-loom weavers were stopped by a tax, all the power-loom weavers would be thrown upon the world. What are they to resort to? Evidently to the hand-loom. But to give up the good tool, and return to the bad, would be to enhance the price of the goods produced. The inevitable consequence would be, a diminished demand; in consequence of the diminished demand, some of the power-loom weavers would not find work at the hand-loom: compete, however, they would, and so depress wages below the present low scale. If the employment of women and girls were confined to the power-loom, the above argument would be untenable; but the fact that the practice extends to the hand-loom, demands the most serious consideration of all who propose to tax the power-loom. The power-loom weavers would at once be cast upon the hand-loom, and the question is, for every hundred so competing, would there be work? The answer must be in the negative. The demand for hand-loom weavers would certainly be greater than at present, but it would not be equal to the new supply, that is, to the hand and power-loom weavers taken together, and the result would be, a depression below the present wages of the hand-loom weaver. If the depression were merely down to the earnings of hand-loom weavers, it would be bad enough, inasmuch as the power-loom affords 11*s.* $2\frac{3}{4}$*d.* where the hand-loom affords only 7*s.**

But there is another point of view in which the proposed tax should be placed. All that we can do is to prohibit the setting up of power-looms, or mules, wherever the British Parliament has jurisdiction. It has already been shown, by the evidence of several of the very witnesses who ask for a tax, that our manufacturers have much to fear from foreign competition. The argument was good in the case of the corn-laws; so also is it good in the case of machinery. A tax would, in fact, be a premium to the setting up of manufacturing machinery abroad; and, when too late, we should become sensible of our error; we should find

* 8*s.* $1\frac{1}{2}$*d. with deductions.*

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find foreign manufactures too firmly established to be dislodged. America, Prussia and Russia, might then safely repeal their tariffs; our machine tax would take their place.*

It may be supposed that the prohibition to export machinery may be made more stringent. All we get by such absurd laws is to lose the trade of machine-making. A machine is an invention which may be transmitted by a drawing, or even in the inventor's brain; and if we will neither use the machine here, nor permit our machines to be used by others, our machine-makers must needs open their shop amongst those who will be their customers. The laws against *transporting, enticing and seducing our artists*, and against artisans resident abroad, are happily blotted from our statute book. The evil arising from the setting up of foreign manufactures was, as we have already seen, apprehended by many of the witnesses who regarded machinery as fraught with unmixed, uncompensated evil.

I have purposely considered machinery on the most narrow grounds, that is, in reference solely to the interests of the hand-loom weaver; and the conclusion to which I have come is, that any attempt to restrain its operation, would be productive of the most ruinous consequences to them. The legislator, however, has a higher duty to perform; he must look to the effects of a restraining or prohibiting tax, on the interests of the whole body of the people, and, in so doing, he will find the danger augment at every step he takes.

If once the principle of a tax for the avowed purpose of restraining improvements is recognized, where is its application to end? Not a single improvement can possibly be made, but that existing interests are, in some way or other, for a time, disturbed. To give to the parties temporarily affected a claim to a restrictive tax in their favour, is to say,—at this point shall improvement, shall civilization stop. A machine is adopted only because it performs its work either more cheaply or better, or both. We have seen that in the case of the power-loom it gives better wages; we may also conclude that it gives better profits, or the capitalists could not set up machines. This promotes saving; capital becomes enlarged, and the result is, an increasing demand for labour of every kind. A considerable portion, indeed by far the greater portion, of the advantage of a machine goes to the whole community of consumers in the shape of cheapness. Every consumer is enabled to make a small saving in the sum he has been accustomed to lay out on the article just rendered cheaper, and he has more to expend on other articles. A tax on any number of the machines which produce the varied articles of consumption, would be to depress the condition of the whole community. But this is not all; the small savings in the aggregate make a large sum, and as they are not now-a-days unprofitably hoarded, they go to the purchase of other articles, and so create a demand for labour, which improves wages; or the savings, instead of being expended, may be invested in a savings bank, or otherwise, in which case, they contribute to the aggregate capital of the nation, and so go to employ labour. The interest of the whole community, therefore, demands that improvement should not be checked; and, in the present case, it affords additional satisfaction to reflect, that the real interests of the hand-loom weavers coincide with that of the people at large. It is fearful to contemplate the devastation which the stoppage of machinery would inevitably bring about.

Some of the witnesses, who clearly perceived that ruin to the hand-loom weavers, as well as to others, must follow a restraining tax, advocated the expedient of shortening the duration of factory hours to ten. I myself never contemplate the long hours of labour, both in and out of factory, without excessive pain. I cannot help seeing that the intellectual and moral improvement of the people, while subject to excessive toil, must be lamentably slow; I have, moreover, no doubt that the time will come when ten hours, and even eight hours, will be deemed a full day's work; but it can only be by the due adjustment of the supply of labour to the demand. Any attempt to enforce the change by law must be pernicious.

The present Factory Act restricted the duration of the work to twelve hours. It is well known, that before the Act many factories worked sixteen and eighteen hours a-day; and some even the whole twenty-four; but it is equally certain, that many were at the same time idle, and others not half employed; so that the real

* It is sometimes said, "Our foreign trade is trifling, let us look to our home trade." In 1835 we exported to all countries woollen goods, valued at 6,635,376*l.*—a trade too important to jeopardize.

real effect of the Act was not to reduce the aggregate time of working, but to equalize it. In this lies the safety of the Act. Had it overstepped that mark, had it really encroached upon the province of production, wages would have been reduced in proportion, and its repeal would long ere this have been demanded by the workers themselves. That the Act, in so far as it *nominally* reduced hours, stopped just on the safe side, may be inferred from this, that there are still mills occasionally not fully employed. The instant the law passes the line of the actual aggregate average,—a line which can only be ascertained by trial, but which there is reason to believe the present Act *nearly* approaches—that instant must wages fall in proportion. And why? clearly because the supply of labour remains undiminished, and the active competition of the labourers must force them to agree to a reduction of wages for a reduction of work. It can never be too often repeated, that wages can only be raised by increasing employment by means of increased capital, or by preventing the undue increase of labour.

One subject only remains to be noticed, namely, the proposal to establish boards of trade for the regulation of wages. The object is said to be to equalize the wages paid by different masters for similar work, leaving the skilful and steady weaver to reap the advantage of his superiority. Whilst this is the ostensible object, the hope* is expressed, that the tendency will be permanently to raise wages. I proceed to examine both the avowed object and the hope.

It is said that skill is to be permitted to operate unchecked; this should rather be said of the habit of rapidity possessed by some weavers. Suppose the regulation to prevail, that all employers shall pay the same price for the set, with a given number of hanks of weft in the piece of 30 yards, say a plainback of 50 set, with 15 score of hanks: now, there may be, and often is, a great difference in the quality of the yarn used in the manufacture of the same nominal set. The manufacturer of the fine goods will require the most skilful hands; the manufacturer of a coarser description of goods of the same set can put up with hands of inferior skill. Thomas, Willett & Co., for instance, employ the very best hands; if they find that a weaver to whom they have entrusted a piece of fine goods, unable to do the work in an adequate manner, they give him no more; the workman whose services are thus dispensed with, goes to another employer, who makes rather inferior goods, and readily gets a warp. This he is capable of weaving in a manner satisfactory to his employer, but at wages somewhat lower, in proportion to his inferior manner of doing his work. But the set is nominally the same: hence, the plan proposed breaks down all distinction of skill, as to the manner of doing the work, and leaves difference of earnings to depend on rapid weaving. Rapidity of weaving is now a great source of difference in the earnings of weavers; but the manner of doing the work is another. The latter qualification now commands the highest rate of wages, the former enables the weaver to make the most of his advantages. Some men will be good, but slow weavers; others will be inferior, but swift weavers; some will be both slow and bad; a few, a very few will be both good and swift. The extreme combinations, *i.e.* slow combined with bad weaving, swift with good, will make all the difference between Peter Butterfield earning 3*s.* 3*d.* a week, and Joseph Brook earning 13*s.* 9*d.*, and occasionally more. The plan, therefore (supposing it not liable to evasion) would really effect more than it proposes; it would do more than equalize the rate of wages; it would break down half the advantage of skill. Unless, therefore, it offers some other great advantage, this alone is a sufficient reason to condemn it.

No hand-loom weavers would propose an *equalization* of wages did he contemplate an equalization downwards. The object is, that the equalization should be according to the scale paid by the most liberal masters for the best work, and the most skilled hands; in other words, to secure better wages. It should here be once more observed, that the rate of wages depends upon the number of the competitors for employment, compared with the aggregate fund appropriated to employ them. The fund remaining the same—and the plan includes no scheme either possible or impossible for augmenting that fund—wages, if left to the competition of the market, would rise only in the event of a diminution of labourers. If, then, the law enacts that wages shall rise, it is equivalent to saying, fewer labourers shall have work. It is forcing an adjustment of wages, which can

* *See* the evidence of Joseph Brook, already quoted.

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can only be the result of a smaller number of labourers. Supposing, therefore, that such a law could be enforced, the result would be, to give good wages to a portion of the whole body, leaving the others without any wages at all.

But could such a law be enforced? Certainly not. The unemployed would inevitably step in, and offer to work for less. The employer would perhaps at first say, "I dare not break the law;" but as both masters and men would be interested in evading it, some scheme for accomplishing the purpose would assuredly be devised. I asked Joseph Brook if he did not think this would be the case; he replied, "None would be so base." I then asked if he would call a man base who wanted food for his family; to this he answered, "His fellow-workmen would protect him." How protect him? give him food? Knowing the weavers—knowing and duly appreciating their praiseworthy disposition to assist each other, I believe they would. But what would such assistance amount to? it would be merely to support the unemployed out of the aggregate fund, which really constituted wages. If 90 took the wages which 100 now take, there would be 10 to "protect," that is, to feed out of the earnings of the 90. The forced adjustment might act by giving more constant employment to the favoured portion to the total exclusion of the less fortunate portion. In such a case the capital destined to the employment of labour would not be impaired; but if there were any loss of labour,—if, like the scheme of shortening hours, it went to the extent of shutting out one single labourer who would otherwise work, the productiveness of capital would be impaired, accumulation would diminish, and a smaller sum would remain to be distributed as wages. If the *rate* could be maintained, the starving few would increase.

That means of evasion would be devised, we may conclude from other cases, where both masters and men have conspired apparently against the interests of the latter to evade the law. The existence of the truck system against stringent laws is a case in point. The interest of the men against the truck system is as strong as it is possible to be against an invasion of regulated wages; in addition to this strong interest, the practice itself is odious and disgraceful, which the evasion of a forced regulation of wages would never be deemed; yet, with this additional security against evasion, the law is avowedly broken, and probably to a much greater extent than can be made to appear upon evidence; for, like intimidation at an election, the very fear which obliges the man to join the master in breaking the law, also forces him to conceal it.

The general conclusion which I have endeavoured to establish is, that it is the business of legislation to remove all checks upon the accumulation of capital, and so improve the *demand* for labour; but with the *supply* thereof it has nothing to do. The regulation of the supply cannot be taken out of the hands of the workmen themselves; all attempts so to do are fraught with unmixed evil, except in the case of children employed in factories. Here the Legislature has a higher duty to perform, and I earnestly hope the guardianship, for such it is, which it has already assumed, will be continued and extended.

I am, gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

(signed) *H. S. Chapman*,
Assistant Commissioner.

Middle Temple,
25 November 1838.

P. S.—I take leave to conclude this account of my stewardship with an abstract of my contingent expenses (exclusive of the daily allowance for personal expenses), under the following four heads:—

	£.	s.	d.
Travelling - - - - - - -	28	4	–
Printing and advertising - - - -	9	5	9
Postages, porterage, and small charges -	7	5	2
Paid for the occasional services of others -	7	11	–
TOTAL - - -	52	5	11

I was occupied 106 days, and the distance I travelled was 1,378 miles, being at the rate of a fraction under 5 *d.* per mile.

H. S. C.

Ireland.

REPORT from *C. G. Otway*, Esq. on *Ireland*.

To Nassau William Senior, Samuel Jones Loyd, William Edward Hickson, and John Leslie, Esqrs., Her Majesty's Commissioners for inquiring into the Condition of the Hand-loom Weavers in the United Kingdom.

Gentlemen,

IN reporting to you the results of my investigations, conducted in conformity to your instructions, I would first direct your attention to the past state of those manufactures connected with hand-loom weaving in Ireland, and the circumstances resulting from the peculiar condition of that country, which tended to prevent the establishment and impede the growth of this species of manufacture.

Preliminary Observations on the Causes which have impeded the Growth of Manufactures in Ireland.

It would be an idle parade of antiquarian research to inquire into the state of Irish manufactures before the accession of James the 1st. Whatever they were, whether small or great, they were swept away in the reigns of the Tudors, when a long series of wars between the Government and the local aristocracy terminated in establishing the supremacy of the Crown, and destroying the authority of the Toparchs or local chieftains. The enormous confiscations at the close of these wars enabled Elizabeth and her successors to attempt extensive systems of colonization. The Scotch settlers in the north of Ireland, and those whom Boyle, afterwards Earl of Cork, brought from the southern counties of England into Munster, were the introducers of nearly all the manufactures that now exist in Ireland.

One great and fatal error in the system of colonization to which I have adverted was, that it became a fixed principle of policy to exclude the native Irish from the benefits of all the improved arts introduced by the new settlers. It had been found, that the Anglo Norman lords who had obtained estates from the Plantagenets, became, in the course of time, alienated from English allegiance and usages; to use the phrase of the day, they were "Hibernis ipsis Hiberniores." To prevent such a result from the new settlement was perversely regarded as an object of greater importance than the settlement itself; it was said to be essentially necessary "to preserve and maintain an English interest in Ireland." But for the unhappy difference of religion between the settlers and the natives, this exclusive system would not have been long maintained; the Irish and the English would gradually have amalgamated, like the Normans and the Saxons; but the distinction of religion gave strength and permanence to the distinction of race, and rendered the line of demarcation scarcely less broad than if it had been perpetuated by difference of colour and physical organization.

The hand-loom weavers, the wool-combers, the clothiers, the dyers, the whitesmiths, and even the mariners, in the south of Ireland were so exclusively Protestant, that they would not allow a Roman-catholic apprentice to be received in any of their trades. The only branch of manufactures permitted to the "mere Irish" was that of brogues or common shoes; and even this trade was not permitted to be carried on within the precincts of walled towns. Hence these manufactures were, and continued to be, exotics; they struck no root in the soil.

The early settlers were long a flourishing and numerous body. In 1689 William and Mary were proclaimed in several small towns in Munster; and the Protestant artizans raised a respectable army to resist James. At an earlier period the desertion of the royal cause by the Munster Protestants under Lords Broghill and Inchiquin, was the principal cause of the easy conquest of Ireland by Cromwell. It may be added, that James the 2d, in his letters, ascribes his failures in Ireland to the fact that the Protestants alone understood the art of making and mending gunlocks, and that in consequence he never was able to keep his partizans supplied with serviceable arms.

During the reigns of William and Anne this exclusion of the Irish from all manufactures was rigorously continued; but to compensate for this, great

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encouragement was given to the immigration of foreign Protestants, especially the Huguenots, who had fled from France on the revocation of the edict of Nantes. The bigotry of Louis the Fourteenth upset the magnificent schemes of his minister Colbert, by the expulsion of his Huguenot subjects, and numbers of these men brought their arts, their industry, their capital, and their faith into Ireland; they established several valuable branches of trade in various parts of the country, the woollen manufacture in the south, linens and cambrics in the counties Down and Armagh, and the silk manufacture in Dublin. In support of these refugees, and the arts they carried with them, the Irish landed proprietors were very active: a subscription was raised, as appears from Primate Boulter's letters, for establishing the cambric manufacture in the town of Dundalk, amounting to 30,000 *l.*, and a Monsieur De Joncourt was appointed to collect French operatives, and conduct the establishment. But the Huguenots adopted the baneful system of exclusion, and exerted themselves to prevent the Irish from learning their arts or profiting by their industry. The Duke of Ormond, following the example of the Earl of Cork, also prohibited the instruction of Roman-catholic apprentices, as did the principal landholders, who encouraged foreigners to settle on their estates.

Now this exclusive system at once destroyed the basis of all manufacturing prosperity, the home market. The fabrics introduced by the English and French settlers were of a superior quality, for which the native Irish could only gradually acquire a want as they were raised in the scale of civilization. But instead of thus raising them, the foreign manufacturers, aided by the Legislature, employed every possible means to depress them, and thus blindly drove from their market a whole nation of customers, and confined them to the use of the rude and cheap fabrics which were woven amongst themselves. The manufacturers were thus forced to rely on their foreign trade; but here they came into competition with the English merchants, and aroused the spirit of commercial jealousy. The Act of William prohibiting the export of Irish wool and woollens, destroyed the Irish woollen manufactures, simply because they depended almost solely on foreign sale for their support. There was no independent peasantry, or respectable and wealthy middle class for them to supply.

The Irish Legislature saw this decline of manufactures, but could not dis cover a remedy; it attempted to supply the want of a home market by bounties, duties and premiums. These, of course, aggravated the evil. The manufacturers looked to the premiums and the Parliament, instead of their own industry and the market, and expected that customers could be created by a statute. The manufactures in most places sunk by the sure process of gradual decay. Even where they maintained a lingering existence, the fabrics they produced became greatly deteriorated in quality. I may mention as an instance the cloth called Ratteen, which was once woven so fine as to be fit for court dresses; and I have heard old persons say, who remembered when this manufacture was in fashion, that nothing was more elegant, and at the same time warmer than this production of the looms of Carrick-on-Suir and Clonmel, and yet it is now one of the coarsest kinds of cloth produced in Ireland.

It may be asked why the manufactures of the north did not share the fate of those of the south; but the question is easily solved by a glance at the state of the population in the province of Ulster. The settlement in Ulster was more complete and extensive than that in any other part of Ireland: The natives had been either wholly exterminated or driven into mountainous and remote districts. The landlords and tenants in the manufacturing districts of the north thus belonging to one class; they did not regard each other as hereditary enemies; there was no legacy of oppression on one side and revenge on the other. The Ulster tenant felt (and feels) he had a property in his farm, something on the earth he could call his own; that the fruits of his industry would be allowed to accumulate into a small capital, and, in point of fact, such an accumulation did take place; for the greater part of the capital in the linen manufactures of Ulster, was derived from the savings of agricultural industry, and hence arose the numerous class who were each at the same time a farmer, a weaver, and a linen-dealer (jobber). In the south of Ireland the title to property was unsettled; for more than a century confiscation and re-confiscation followed each other, until the Acts of Settlement and Explanation secured the followers of Cromwell in their estates; there was no community of feeling or interest between the proprietor and the occupants brought about by these Acts. The great object was to establish

establish an English interest in Ireland, and to accomplish this hereditary policy, the two last Stuarts, while they patronised Roman-catholics in their own courts, rigorously maintained the new Protestant proprietary in the south of Ireland. It was not until James the Second was driven from England, that he would allow even of an inquiry into the Act of Settlement, and it is doubtful whether he would have consented, even in Dublin, to its repeal, if a large portion of the re-confiscations had not reverted to the Crown. The repeal of the Irish Act of Settlement, by the Irish Parliament of James the Second, gave the Protestant proprietors a fright from which they have not perfectly recovered even to this day; since that time they have been persuaded that every change of policy, or isolated disturbance, threatens their titles; they deem that they only garrison their estates, and therefore they look upon the native occupants (I cannot call them tenants) as persons ready to eject them upon a favourable opportunity. Hence the Munster landlord was afraid to give the persons who occupied his ground a permanent hold upon the land, or a beneficial interest in its occupancy. The old struggle of title, in natural course, produced the new contest of tenure; and Captain Rock and Lady Clare were as legitimately descended from the Catholic Lords of the Pale, as Jack Straw and Wat Tyler were from the Saxon Thanes who fought at Hastings. There is, and until the relations between landlord and occupant are altered, there can be no accumulation of savings in the south of Ireland from agricultural industry, and hence there was not and can be no spontaneous growth of manufactures from small capitals.

It appears that the Munster manufactures were originally based upon too narrowa foundation; that no rational means were ever used to give them permanence and security; that they were cut off from the aliment which a manufacturing population, to preserve its health, must derive from the surrounding agricultural population, and consequently, that they were foredoomed to decay from mere inanition. It is also evident that, as these exotics declined, there were no plants of native growth to supply their place.

Another reason for the greater prosperity of the linen manufacture in the north of Ireland is, that in Ulster a moderate modus was established for the tithe of flax; but all efforts to have the same modus extended to the rest of Ireland were defeated by the pertinacious opposition of the ecclesiastical authorities. Without at all entering on the general question of tithe, or the policy of taxing the raw materials of industry, it is enough to state that the impost on flax proved to be so heavy that farmers found it to be an unprofitable crop, and it was never cultivated, except in very small patches, in the south of Ireland.

In the present day the principal impediments to the growth of manufacturing industry arise from the want of a comfortable middle class and the condition of the agricultural population. From the nature of his tenure, and the want of an improved system of cultivation, the occupying tenant in most cases receives a very disproportionate share either of the profits of his industry or the produce which the soil is capable of affording; he cannot accumulate for himself nor become a purchaser from others; there is, however, a tendency to improvement and a perceptible increase in those branches of industry more immediately connected with the cultivation of the soil. It would be well if the Irish were convinced that manufactures, to be vigorous, must be of native growth; imported capital and imported arts are equally unavailing, until provision be made for such a development of skill and habit of industry as will render the arts practicable and the capital profitable.

It is of importance to observe that the establishment of manufactures in any country is impeded not only by the difficulty of obtaining the skilful and trained industry applicable to that branch of trade, but also from the want of a countless number of conveniencies and assistance which grows up in a place when trade has been long established. An English gentleman who established a woollen manufactory near Dublin at the close of the last century, and after a struggle of several years was obliged to give it up, thus explained the motives for its establishment and the cause of its failure: "I went to Ireland because I got my water-power for one-fourth of the price I had to pay in Yorkshire, and because wages were much lower. My workmen were not much deficient in skill, industry, or integrity; but in Yorkshire, if any accident happened a loom, I had only to send next door and borrow another. In Ireland, when any part of the machinery became deranged, I had to send it to Yorkshire to get it repaired.

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I thus found that to establish any manufacture, special mechanical skill is required, not only in one branch of industry, but in many; and as this could not then be obtained in Ireland, I was unable to compete with my English rivals."

State of the Hand-loom Weavers as a Class.

I would now direct the attention of the Commissioners to the state of the hand-loom weavers of Ireland, taking a general view of them as a whole, without any distinction of the different divisions of their trade, or the nature of the different modes in which they are employed, contrasting their condition with that of the hand-loom weavers at former periods, and those other classes of labourers to whom, from the nature of their labour, they can fairly be compared.

In taking a general view of the state of the hand-loom weavers of Ireland, it is necessary that the condition of the great mass of the labour population, and the causes which in common affect the value of all labour in Ireland, should be clearly borne in view. Although the earnings of the hand-loom weavers might appear lamentably low, their periods of employment uncertain and limited, yet when we compare their condition with that of other classes not dissimilar to them in circumstances of apprenticeship to learn, skill to conduct, and capital to carry on their several branches of productive industry, the profits of the weavers will be found not greatly inferior to the average of other trades, and certainly above the general average attainable by the labouring classes in Ireland.

The numbers of the able-bodied population seeking for employment in Ireland vastly exceed the demand for their labour. The class in Ireland employing labourers is comparatively restricted, and the amount of the casual earnings of the great body of the agricultural labourers is totally disproportioned to their adequate support; and to those unacquainted with their management and wretched mode of life, it would appear that they must starve or live on charity.

The rate of wages of all classes of operatives, with the exception of a few trades, which are limited by the expense and the difficulty of learning them, or which require a continuous industry and attention rarely to be met with, are much lower than in any other part of the United Kingdom.

The distressed condition of the Irish agricultural labourer proceeds not so much from the low rate of wages he receives for his labour while employed, as from the circumstance that, owing to the mode in which the land is cultivated, labour to any extent is only periodically required. For 30 weeks in the year 300,000 of our labourers are out of employment,—not wanted on any terms; while from 8 to 10 weeks in the remaining 20 all hands are in demand, and the wages of the labourer, in many localities, double, and in some treble. During this period the hand-loom weavers are enabled to share in the temporary advantages of the labourer; while, during the portions of the year when demand for out-door labour is almost extinct, and which is peculiarly fitted for in-door employments, they have their looms to fall back on. Between seed and harvest time a great part of the labour required in Ireland is confined to those cottier tenants who, in addition to their rent, are obliged to pay "bond service," by which is meant that "labour rent" which the peasant is called on to perform for the proprietor, either gratis or for a small remuneration, generally received in kind, for the privilege of being allowed to hold a cabin and garden at an exorbitant rent. The advantage which the hand-loom weavers in the rural districts enjoy over the great mass of the labouring population, in having a resource open for their labour when a demand for agricultural labour has ceased, reacts with most injurious effects on the former; for the agricultural labourer, finding that his harvest is participated in by the weaver, while he is debarred from any participation in their periods of employment, a temptation is held out to him to learn weaving, and to bring up his children to it, and so adds to the number of persons not capable of being employed profitably as hand-loom weavers, either to themselves or their employers, as compared with the demand for hand-loom labour.

The periodical destitution into which a vast number of our labouring population are thrown, proceeds, in a great measure, from the possession of a portion of land being almost the sole defence of the people from entire destitution, from the effects

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effects of the Irish system of tillage, and the undue inducement for the cultivation of corn, which, at particular seasons of the year, requires a great quantity of labour, and at others little or none. Were our agricultural system on a better arrangement, and under a proper rotation of crops, our land not run out and wasted by successive crops of corn, until it scarcely produces the seed again, a surplus labouring population not induced, and subjected to such periodical fluctuations of stagnation and demand, our agricultural labourers, and those other classes of labourers upon whose trades their redundant numbers have always a tendency to press, would be in a far better condition. These periodical seasons of a total want of work, and a sudden demand for the most active work, operates fatally on the industrious habits of the Irish labourer; it destroys industry, and encourages sloth. The habits of idleness thus engendered are by no means inconsistent with occasional active and laborious exertion of the most extraordinary kind.

Under strong exciting circumstances the Irish peasant will work harder than the labourer of any other country; but his toil is neither steady nor continuous. The season of total inactivity comes as regularly as the season of violent exertion; and the character of the peasant is rendered all the worse by the striking magnitude of the vicissitude. "A habit of idleness, acquired by the remission of labour during only one period of the year, would unnerve the arms of a good workman in England; it would drive even the man who is naturally temperate and sober to the alehouse, convert him without fail into a tippler or sot, and in the sequel send his starving family to the workhouse*." Another writer has remarked, that "the free circulation of labour is of the greatest importance, as regards the interest of the industrious poor, and is perhaps the chief barrier against a state of indigence †." Were the amount of labour already required more equally divided over the year, by a proper rotation of crops, which would keep up a succession of labour, these evils would, in a great measure, be avoided; and the want of abstinence and forethought of an ignorant and impoverished population would not be submitted to such unfair temptation, or be required to adapt themselves to fluctuations which would require all the abstinence of an enlightened, industrious, and comfortable people to provide against.

The demand for agricultural labour to any considerable extent being only periodical, tends in those districts, where the hand-loom weavers are spread over the country, and compose the great proportion of the population, as in the north of Ireland, not only to attract an undue number of unskilled persons into that business, but also to distract the attention of the weavers from their proper vocation, and they become neither good weavers or agricultural labourers; and from their endeavours to serve two masters, to divide their time and attention between their loom and agricultural labour, proceeds one of the causes of the undue detention and ill-performance of their work, the two prolific sources of the evils to which hand-loom weavers are subject. It will be seen that since the system of men of large capital giving out work to weavers who formerly worked on their own account, and combined the incongruous position of dealer and operative in their own persons, these evils have been lessened, though still operating to a considerable extent; and the county Down, from being one of the worst cultivated counties, from the fact of the labourers being almost all linen-jobbers, is now becoming one of the best. Under the old system of a country weaving population, combining in their persons the office of both a weaver and a master manufacturer, and having their attention divided between agriculture and manufactures, Arthur Young, who travelled through Ireland in the years 1776, 1777, and 1778, thus describes the consequences: "Change the scene, and view the north of Ireland. You there behold a whole province peopled by weavers; it is they who cultivate or rather beggar the soil, as well as work at the looms. Agriculture is there in ruins; it is cut up by the root, extirpated, annihilated; the whole region is the disgrace of the kingdom; all the crops you see are contemptible, are nothing but filth and weeds; no other part of Ireland can exhibit the soil in such a state of poverty and desolation. A farming traveller who goes through that country with attention, will be shocked at seeing wretchedness in the shape of a few beggarly oats on a variety of most fertile soils, which, were they in Norfolk, would soon rival the best lands in that country. But the cause of all these evils, which are absolute

* Townshend's Survey of Cork.

† Colquhoun upon Indigence.

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absolute exceptions to everything else on the face of the globe, is easily found. A most prosperous manufacture, so contrived as to be the destruction of agriculture, is certainly a spectacle for which we must go to Ireland. It is owing to the fabric spreading over all the country instead of being confined to towns. This in a certain degree is found in some manufactures in England, but never to the exclusion of farmers. There, literally speaking, is not a farmer in 100 miles of the linen country in Ireland. The lands are infinitely subdivided; no weaver thinks of supporting himself by his loom; he has always a piece of potatoes, a piece of oats, a patch of flax, and grass or weeds for a cow: thus his time is divided between his farm and his loom. * * * * As land thus managed will not yield rent, they depend for that on their web. If linens sell indifferently, they pay their rents indifferently, and if it sells badly, they do not pay them at all; rents in general, at their value, being worse paid there than in any other part of Ireland. * * * * I am confident, from having gone over the whole with attention, that any tract of land in the linen country, if it could be moved to some other part of the kingdom, where there are no weavers, would let 20 per cent. higher than it does at present; and I am so convinced of this, that if I had an estate in the south of Ireland, I would as soon introduce pestilence and famine as the linen trade, carried on as it is at present in the north of Ireland. Particular spots may be and are high let in the north of Ireland, but I speak of the average of any large tract. But if instead of the manufacture having so diffused itself as absolutely to banish farmers, it had been confined to towns, which it might easily have been, the very contrary effect would have taken place, and all those vast advantages to agriculture would have flowed which flourishing manufactures in other countries occasion. * * * The manufacturers would have been confined to their own business, and the farmers to theirs, and that both trades would have flourished the better for this, the minutes of the journey very generally show."

In taking a general view of the hand-loom weavers as a body, and noticing such general circumstances as may require to be taken into consideration before entering on the subject of their peculiar condition or the more minute divisions into which their business is divided, the consideration of the nature of the labour employed must not fail to be noticed; the degree of strength, skill, time, and capital required to learn and conduct it. From the evidence laid before the Commissioners, it appears that one half of the labour employed on hand-looms is that of young persons of both sexes, of the ages of from 12 to 20. Females are now generally employed in hand-loom weaving, a new feature in the history of Irish weaving; and except in the heavier and coarsest fabrics, such as broad woollens, sacking and sailcloth, which are also the worst paying, they are equal to any, if not the best workers. Thus, though the female population in the weaving districts would appear to have been thrown out of employment by the introduction of mill-spun yarn as a substitution for hand-spun, and the reduction in the earnings from hand-spinning reduced from 6*d.* to 2*d.* or 1*d.* a day, still it must be borne in mind that the introduction of mill-spun yarn has permitted, by the greater ease with which it is wove, the application of female labour to the most successful operations of the loom; not only female, but almost infant labour; and whatever effect this may have on the condition of the hand-loom female weaving population, both in a moral and physical point of view, it must still be taken into account in forming a proper estimate of the nature of the remuneration obtainable for hand-loom labour.

Owing to the redundancy of able-bodied men in all departments of the labour market, the application of female labour is, generally speaking, in Ireland (for hire), but very partially employed, and even compared with the low wages of the Irish labourer most poorly remunerated; and hand-loom weaving presents almost alone the important feature of affording anything like constant employment to the female portion of the population. It will also be perceived that children of both sexes, from the ages of 12 to 20, are amongst the best and most productive labourers at the loom, and that the period for acquiring a knowledge of the trade, so as, in ordinary cases, to attain the average proficiency, varies from six months to three years; and that at all periods, even from the very time the child is put on the loom, it is capable of affording assistance. Accustomed from its earliest infancy to witness the operations, to assist in the winding and the incidental repairs, by almost imperceptible degrees it acquires that habit, knowledge—that language of the loom, which smooths and lessens the difficulties of the learner. In the hand-loom weaving factories, where the most difficult

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and intricate fabrics are woven, the apprentices are merely at first put on as draw-boys, and in a great degree left to learn the business by observation of the process. This circumstance, though it affords a temptation to the indigent parent dangerous to the health and education of the child, and tends to induce an ill-divided number into a participation of the business, must nevertheless be taken into account.

It is true that there are branches of the trade which require all the strength of man's labour, all the skill of intellect, and all the practice acquired by length of time; but on the Commissioners referring to the evidence, they will perceive that on those fabrics requiring this combination of qualities, the rates of wages are proportionably high. In respect to capital, with the exception of those who work on their own account for the market, and require a floating capital to procure a supply of the raw material, the necessary capital is confined to a few pounds; two to three pounds being the average price for a loom, reeds, hedles, and brushes, or from 10*s.* to 20*s.* per annum for the hire, and the small sums required for procuring in the first instance the necessary supply of light, dressing, and tallow, with the wages of a winder, which labour is almost universally performed by a member of the weaver's family, who would otherwise be out of employment. In deducting from the earnings of the weaver the expense of winding the weft, it must be remembered that the labour used for this purpose would, if not engaged in this manner, be in all probability unemployed. Taking a survey of the hand-loom weavers as a body, and a general view of the demand for their labour, I do not think there is an excess of skilful workmen for the amount of work to be done in ordinary good times; but I think there is a redundancy of bad workmen, who are never employed except in seasons of an extraordinary demand, and consequently that hand-loom labour is ill divided and badly apportioned.

As the trade is scattered over the country, not confined to districts and towns, and also as there are many causes in operation, of which I shall treat more fully hereafter, the weavers do not divide their labour according to the demand for it. The absence of a law of settlement, and the annual migration of the Irish agricultural labourers to England, have induced many to believe that Irish industry is of a migratory character. There can be no greater error. The Irish operatives of every class, from the highest to the lowest, are remarkable for their attachment to localities. The cottier labourer brings back his earnings in the English harvest to pay the rent of his wretched cabin and overcharged potatoe ground; the weaver, witnessing the gradual decline of trade in his district, clings to the hope of improvement in his own locality with desperate fidelity.

In attempting to compare the condition of the hand-loom weavers of the present day with those of other periods, we must bear in mind that they are at present labouring under the effects of peculiar causes. The hand-loom weavers of Ireland have only recently been brought into active competition with the great manufacturing districts of England and Scotland, by the abolition of protecting and prohibitory duties. The linen trade is in a transition state, arising from the new method in which that manufacture is being carried on.

Manufacturers with large capital and extensive connexions now give out webs to the weavers ready to be put on the loom, and pay by the yard for the weaving of the piece. Mill-spun instead of hand-spun yarn is now generally used, and the numerous class which formerly grew their own flax, spun their own yarn, wove the cloth, and sold it in the brown markets, is now passing away.

The adoption of this new system was necessary for the preservation of the trade; it opens a wider market and affords greater advantages to the manufacturer, and is more profitable to the weaver than that to which both parties sometimes revert, as "the rule of the good old times."

The change in the mode of conducting the linen manufacture, and the substitution, in a great degree, of one class of operatives for another, however necessary or beneficial for the trade, has produced and is producing considerable disturbance, and during the transition state it is to be expected that many individual interests must suffer.

I have already slightly alluded to the causes which impeded the growth of manufacturing industry in Ireland, and operated to limit her home market. How trusting to foreign demand, commercial jealousy was aroused in England,

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and how the prohibitions on the export of some of her manufactures, prevented the industry of the country from being proportionately exercised with that of other nations, added to the perpetual interference of her own Parliament in every branch of domestic industry, "either by laying on restrictions, or by giving bounties, but always doing mischief."

The exclusive system on which manufactures were established, the ill-judged legislation to which they were subjected, the want of respect for commercial industry, nay, the contempt in which trade was held by those who called themselves gentlemen, led to the utter ruin of commercial feeling in Ireland. The idle and profligate squireens, "men amongst horses and horses amongst men," as they were justly called, not only among themselves kept up the perverse notion that trading industry was disgraceful, but by force of connexion and example, infused a desire into those who had turned their attention to trade, to quit it and set up as gentlemen at the very time when the fruits of their industry could with advantage be profitably reinvested.

The hand-loom weaving of Ireland during the 18th century was comparatively restricted to narrow limits, and principally confined to the linen trade in the north of Ireland, where the injurious causes I have noticed did not operate to such an extent. The linen trade not being supposed to interfere with England, was peculiarly encouraged; yet, even under these circumstances, Mr. Arthur Young, in the year 1779, states, "Irish linen has all the advantages of a freedom from a great variety of excises which the manufacturer of English linens labour under, and yet we not only support the competition, but thrive under it. Their broad cloth is also made under the same advantages, and compare it, both in price and quality, with that of England. I bought it at 17 *s.* 6 *d.* a yard at the Dublin Society's warehouse, without the master manufacturer's profit, and I will venture to assert, from weaving both, 23 *s.* to be cheaper for the English cloth; the same fact runs through a variety of their fabrics. The fixed trade, capital, and skill of England, will for ever bid defiance to the no excises of Ireland." Thus the Irish, it appears, were not able to compete with the English: the absence of excises and the nominal cheapness of labour proved of no advantage. The hand-loom weavers of Ireland, with almost the only exception of the linen weavers in the north of Ireland (where in the years 1776 and 1777 the weavers were only able to earn on the average 1 *s.* 5 *d.* a day on fine linens, and 1 *s.* a day on coarse), were in a great measure restricted to the manufacture of coarse and rude fabrics for country or farmers' use.

The supply of the markets in the remote and wild districts, where the want of the means of internal communication and the poverty of the people prevented competition enabled the hand-loom weavers of the neighbourhood to command the local markets. There are no data for determining with anything like accuracy the earnings of the weavers who were thus employed; their situation could only be compared with that of the country weavers, who, in remote districts, where shop-cloth has not been generally introduced, still make up job webs of coarse frize, blankets, sheetings, shirtings, and bandle linen for the use of the peasantry: these weavers were and are to some extent paid both in money and kind, and I am inclined to think that though the numbers are greatly lessened, their earnings were not very much higher than they are at this day. In considering those portions of the evidence, in which, from hearsay, those witnesses who have spoken of the periods prior to the present century, and who are such *laudatores temporis acti*, it will be found in many instances that the comparison has been instituted with the state of weaving to which I have just alluded, and in no way has any claim to be considered as affording a fair comparison with the present state of the whole trade.

Towards the close of the 18th century, the principles of free trade began to advance, and the futility of prohibitions and bounties, to prop a falling, or advance a prosperous trade, became daily more apparent. The rebellion of 1798, and the agitation of the question of the Union, put a stop to manufacturing industry. The manufacturers and operatives, apprehensive of a decrease in their home market (already limited), as a consequence of the Union and the withdrawal of many of the nobility and gentry, upon whose favour the sickly manufactures principally depended, clamorously demanded compensation and an increase and continuance of those bounties and protections under which their trade had dwindled. The government of the day, as if doubting the arguments they had used in favour of the legislative union, and the consolidation of the

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interest of the two countries, granted a scale of prohibitions and bounties for a period of 21 years, with a progressive decrease every seven years; thus the Irish manufactures continued subject to the evil tendencies of these laws which, so far from proving stimulants to their improvement, had actually paralyzed their activity. Due regard was not paid to economy in the several processes of the manufactured articles, at the time when it was more than ever necessary to bring them, by cheapness, within the reach of a large number of consumers. The introduction of new fabrics was prevented, which, as capital increased, and as habits of continuous industry were introduced, and new forms of skill opened, might have been undertaken with advantage. The rate of wages was for a time kept up, and the discontent of the poor short-sighted artizan was prevented, who did not see that the cause which temporarily kept up his rate of wages both diminished and rendered uncertain his chance of employment. Bounties and prohibitions, added to the fatal effects of the continued attempts on the part of the weavers to regulate and fix their rate of wages, attempts of which the Legislature had set them the example by its unwise interference, almost totally destroyed the silk trade. It dwindled into a mere court luxury, dependent on the capricious smile of vice-regal patronage, or the uncertain effect of charity balls.

The woollen trade, from the negligence and extravagance of its manufacturers, the want of an extensive home-market, from the poverty of the peasantry, and the absence of a middle class, notwithstanding its monopoly of clothing all the Irish regiments, no matter where quartered, almost expired before the protecting duties were withdrawn, and it is only now beginning to revive and advance towards a healthy condition.

Linen could not be exported with much profit; and the bonus given and devised for its protection and encouragement, acted so as to create and foster English and Scotch competition. The Irish manufacturer was able to export only mixed goods. From the manner the linen trade was conducted, he was unable to procure a large supply of any one article, and was obliged to purchase in the linen markets whatever was brought in by the linen-jobbing weavers. The English and Scotch having demanded and obtained a bonus on their exports, as well as the Irish, were induced to manufacture and export coarse, and consequently less expensively made up linens, by which means, as the bonus was paid according to quantity, not quality, they obtained a larger share on a given quantity (compared with the outlay and risk) than the Irish manufacturer. This advantage, added to that of a better yarn market, enabled them to undersell the Irish in their own coarse linen manufacturing districts, (Drogheda, for instance,) and so to improve and augment their linen trade as to be able nearly to supply their own markets. As the protecting duties decreased, we find, by the official returns, that the linen-trade increased: and since their total withdrawal, it has attained a condition it never before enjoyed; whether we regard the extent of the manufacture, the quality of the fabrics, or the mode in which the manufacture is conducted.

For want of a home market our cotton goods were forced into England; and the manufacturers, sooner than keep their stock on hand, at times preferred paying the duty on their exportation, which, in 1801, amounted to 68 per cent. *ad valorem*, and was reduced to 10 per cent. in 1816. The evil of the transition state, the passing from dependence to independence, had only been postponed, by the protecting duties, from 1800 to 1826, when the cotton trade had greater difficulties and more powerful competitors to contend against. The exports of cotton and cotton yarn more than doubled from 1801 to 1825: but this is not to be accounted for by the protecting duties; for, according as the trade was opened, our exports increased and arrived at the highest when the duties were taken off. Previous to the Union, the efforts of the Legislature had in vain attempted to establish and promote the cotton trade. At present, although considerable embarrassments have taken place in the trade, and great distress has been caused by its falling off, and by its withdrawal from particular districts, it has been nevertheless considerably extended since the prohibitory duties were abolished, and contributes largely to the supply of the English and foreign markets.

The cotton trade suffered more than any other branch of manufactures during the panic of 1825 and 1837. It has had to compete with the extensive and long-established cotton manufactories of England; her power-looms and spinning factories; her direct market for the raw material, and all that capital and skill

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could accomplish to cheapen production and enlarge a market. Some large cotton-mills have been lately established in Ireland, and intelligent manufacturers have embarked in the trade; and some of the finest specimens of calico prints in the London market are Irish manufacture.

The general results of my inquiries lead to the conclusion, that hand-loom weaving is the least profitable of all trades in Ireland; and this is a necessary consequence, from the ease in which the trade is learned, and the order of skill and industry requisite to conduct it. Comparing those engaged in it with any other class of mechanics, in the amount of wages earned, the time necessary to gain a given sum, and the steadiness and certainty of employment, they will be found to be decidedly the worst off in every one of these particulars. But, if comparison were made between them and the general run of agricultural labourers in Ireland, men not brought up to any particular trade, but who are ready to turn their hand to anything, the hand-loom weavers will be found to earn better wages, and have much more constant employment; and this must be the case, so long as farm labour in Ireland continues to be an uncertain and fluctuating branch of industry, to which none are specially trained, but are hired on chance at the moment when something is to be done, and discharged when the job is finished.

I do not think that I should be far from correct if I was to reckon the average amount of earnings of the hand-loom weavers, as a body, for the last three years, taking in the year 1837 (one of the worst years for hand-loom weavers that has occurred since 1825), clear and above all expenses, and deducting the average time they are kept waiting for work, at from 9 *d.* to 1 *s.* per day, including, in this estimate, persons of both sexes, from the ages of 14 to 70. This is low, when considered as a trade, but high, when compared with the earnings of the great mass of the labouring population. The actual earnings of the hand-loom weavers will be entered into more minutely when reviewing the evidence and the state of the separate divisions into which the trade is divided. The physical condition of the weavers appears to me to be worse than that of any class of Irishmen. The length of time they continue at work, and the damp, unwholesome cabins they work in [a disgrace to any country that would permit such a state of things], appears one great cause of this inferiority. To this we must add their low diet. The health and strength of Irishmen are referred to as a proof of the wholesomeness of potatoes, as an article of food; but Irishmen are strong and healthy, not by, but in spite of, their food; it is to air and exercise, to their ignorance of comfort, which withholds from them the feelings of want, that they owe their health; they are below the reach of care. I could not pass a weaver by without knowing him to be one; and I never saw a weaver that had not dyspepsia written in his countenance.

The moral and educational condition of weavers as a body does not differ much from that of other classes of Irishmen in the same rank of life. The special circumstances connected with them on this head will be more appropriately brought out when I come to consider the separate trades into which they are divided; but I must generally remark that they are left destitute of the instruction appropriate to their circumstances and condition. They are taught, in most instances, reading and writing, but they are not taught how to apply this limited instruction. They are not taught the principles on which the stability of their trade, and every trade which is designed to flourish, must be based; consequently, they are utterly ignorant of the first principles of economic science; they ask resources from others which can only be found within themselves, and when pressed by difficulties, they have recourse to remedies which only tend to aggravate the disease; many of them are men of great natural intelligence and native talent, but these very qualifications, ill regulated and wrongly directed, lead to evil. Such men become leaders among their fellows, but only to pervert their efforts from what is useful and practical to what is hopeless in the result, and pernicious in the attempt. Their combinations and associations against employers are the result, not of knowledge, but of ignorance. By the baneful system of combinations, the poor artizans, without being sensible of it themselves, are bound together in a warfare of exaction, and banded to distress and injure each other. But I do not hesitate to assert that these evils might be removed by a judicious system of instruction, which would show them that the interests of the operatives is identical with that of the employer, and that the workman

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workman best secures his own rights when he respects the rights of others. In illustration of this important fact, I beg leave to mention a circumstance which occurred while I was taking evidence, omitting the names of persons and places, for reasons sufficiently obvious.

Two leading men in the division of their trade were selected to give me evidence. I was struck with the natural talent of the men. On the distress of their trade they were eloquent, in the fullest sense of the word; they were practised debaters; but on the causes of that condition, and on the remedies proposed, I know not whether the absurdity of the one or the impracticability of the other was the greatest. After I had taken down their evidence, and read it over to them, I told them I wished to speak to them after the hour for receiving evidence was over. I met them, and argued with them the several points of their evidence to which I objected; then told them to go home and consider what I had said, and if they were of the same opinion in the morning, after reflection, I would fair copy their evidence into my evidence-book. They came next morning, but it was to withdraw the absurd portions of their evidence. I had given them a little work, published by the Society for diffusing Useful Knowledge, which contained some of the arguments I had used. They acknowledged they could not answer it. Yet these men were in union, in combination, the very President and Secretary of a combination committee, that had done as much injury to themselves, their employers, and their trade, as any in Ireland. Let this fact speak for itself; do we not daily see how easily the people can be led to evil? Why cannot they be led to good? Adults want teaching as well as children.

Having now given a slight sketch of the causes which impeded the growth of manufactures in Ireland, and treated generally of the hand-loom weavers, and mentioned those circumstances which I deem necessary to be taken into account in forming a just estimate of the subject, I shall turn to the great object of my report and the Commission—the investigation of the present actual condition of the hand-loom weavers, first specifying the different materials on which hand-loom labour is employed. I shall detail the result of my inquiries on each division separately.

The hand-loom weavers of Ireland are employed on,

1. Silk, and on mixed materials of either silk and flax, or silk and worsted.
2. Flax.
3. Woollen.
4. Cotton, and on mixed materials of flax and cotton.

Silk Trade.

Silk Trade.

The silk manufacture of Ireland is confined to the metropolis. It was introduced by the French refugees, and established in the liberties of Dublin shortly after their settlement in that city, in the year 1693.

The weavers engaged in the manufacture of silk may be divided into those employed on tabinets or poplins, and tabbareas,* on velvets, on ribbons.

Although I have made this classification, yet in point of fact, the number of weavers employed on the manufacture of velvets and ribbons is so very small, that they need scarcely be taken into account in the survey of this branch of industry in Ireland.

The number of silk weavers in Dublin, May 1838, amounted to 400; of these 310 are broad-silk weavers, 280 employed on the manufacture of tabinets and tabbareas, and 30 on the manufacture of velvets; there were also 32 employed in weaving ribbons, the remainder are tabinet weavers, only occasionally employed, or who have been whole silk or single-hand ribbon weavers, and are unable to obtain any employment; of the 280 tabinet weavers, 230 have been in constant employment for from 9 to 10 months in each year, during the last three years, taking the mean between the statement of the employers and the operatives: the remaining number from age, extreme poverty, want of industry or skill, are but seldom employed,

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* Tabbareas are shot with linen yarn, tabinets with worsted.

employed, and only on some sudden and unusual demand in the market for tabinets. The trade regulations, as they are called, prevent the manufacturers from giving, or the operative from taking, less than a fixed rate of wages. The manufacturer being thus debarred from lowering his wages (and compelled to pay according to the same rate, both good and bad workmen), on a fall in demand for his manufacture in the market, limits the quantity of work he gives out, and only employs his best workmen; thus, except in cases of an extraordinary demand for tabinets, some new patterns to be made up for the Court, or a charity ball, or some large order to be executed for a new Lady-lieutenant to furnish the Castle, when all hands are required, there is a number of silk-weavers altogether out of employment, whose ages and habits unfit them for other employments, even if they could obtain them, and they swell the crowd of mendicants that swarm the streets, and add to the burden of their petition for relief, the incentive of their being poor weavers out of employment.

There are no data for determining with anything like accuracy the occasional earnings of this class, but their actual condition is wretched in the extreme; but this class is now limited and has been gradually passing away. The numbers of the tabinet weavers, in the ordinary state of the trade, do not exceed the demand for their labour, and except for the trade regulation to which I have alluded, there would be very few, if any, taking the average of two or three years, in distress from want of sufficient employment.

The earnings of the tabinet weavers are equal if not superior to those of any class of weavers I have met, and much higher than those of the silk weavers in Manchester and its vicinity. Mr. Gheoghan, one of the most respectable manufacturers in Dublin, and employing one-third of the whole number of tabinet weavers, states: "I do not find much difference in the condition of the hand-loom weavers of poplins (tabinets) during my experience of 25 years; the rate of their wages is now nearly as good as it ever has been during that time, with the exception of a reduction in the wages of figured goods consequent on the introduction of jacquard machines."

It must be remembered, that if jacquard machines lowered the rate of wages, they lessened the difficulty of the labour, and dispensed with the use of draw-boys, whom the weavers were, in most instances, obliged to provide. I give a tabular return of the earnings of 60 weavers, furnished by the weavers, their names, address, number in each family, number employed in each family, total income of each family, weekly expenses for winding, and rent, taxes, fuel, soap, candles, distinguishing their net, from their clear weekly, income left for subsistence; the number of looms unemployed in each family, number of weeks each loom has been idle, and the number of hours the weavers work each day. The returns, with the exception of seven or eight, refer to heads of families.

I give the following table, though it is manifestly open to serious objections. It will be seen in a subsequent part of this Report that not only the manufacturers, but the deputation of weavers selected to give evidence, state the amount of the earnings of the weavers to be greater, and the various deductions to be less than those stated in the table. I think, however, it is of importance to show what were the lowest representations made to me, as to the condition of the tabinet weavers.

TABINET WEAVERS.—Dublin, May 1838.

NAMES.	RESIDENCE.	Number in Family.	Number Employed in each Family.	Total Income of each Family.	Weekly Expenses for Winding, &c.	Rent, Taxes.	Fuel, Soap, and Candles.	Total Weekly Expenses.	Clear Weekly Income for Food and Clothing.	Number of Looms Employed in each Family.	Number of Looms Unemployed in each Family.	Number of Weeks each Loom has been Idle the last 12 Months.	Number of Hours Employed each Day.
				£. s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.				
John Brown	Cork-street	2	1	– 10 –	1 4	2 4	2 6	– 6 2	– 3 10	1	– –	8	14
Charles Brennan	ditto	6	1	– 12 –	1 2	1 4	2 6	– 5 –	– 7 –	1	1	13	15
N. Begley	Black Pitts	5	1	– 12 –	1 2	2 6	2 4	– 6 –	– 6 –	1	– –	20	15
Thomas Benson	Dolphin's Barn	2	1	– 15 –	1 2	3 –	2 4	– 6 6	– 8 6	1	1	10	16
John Benson	ditto	2	1	– 12 –	1 1	2 –	2 5	– 5 6	– 6 6	1	1	6	14
John Chillingworth	Ormond-street	3	1	– 15 –	1 2	3 –	2 –	– 6 2	– 8 10	1	2	17	14
Charles Crutchett	Williams's-lane	7	3	2 10 –	3 6	4 –	3 6	– 11 –	1 19 –	3	1	17	14
Michael Barber	Fordam's-alley	2	1	– 12 –	1 2	2 6	2 4	– 6 –	– 6 –	1	1	13	14
Michael Bailey	Pool-street	6	1	– 12 –	1 1	1 4	2 6	– 4 11	– 7 1	1	1	5	14
Henry Burnes	Hanover-lane	3	1	– 12 –	1 2	2 6	2 4	– 6 –	– 6 –	1	1	6	15
John Boylan	Black Pitts	3	1	– 10 –	1 1	2 6	2 –	– 5 7	– 4 5	1	1	17	14
George Dillon	New-row	6	3	2 – –	3 6	5 –	2 6	– 11 –	1 9 –	3	2	26	15
George Fitzgerald	Newmarket	7	1	– 17 –	1 2	1 6	2 –	– 4 8	– 12 4	1	– –	6	14
Samuel Forgeman	Mill-street	4	2	1 2 –	2 2	2 –	2 6	– 6 8	– 15 4	2	1	27	15
Nicholas Buckley	New-row	3	1	– 12 –	1 2	1 6	1 6	– 4 2	– 7 10	1	– –	9	14
William Gill	Chamber-street	4	2	1 4 –	2 4	2 –	2 6	– 6 10	– 17 2	2	– –	20	14
John Healy	Weavers-square	4	2	– 18 –	1 10	3 –	2 –	– 6 10	– 11 2	2	2	18	17
James Hoey	Coombe	3	1	– 15 –	1 2	1 8	1 8	– 4 6	– 10 6	1	1	20	15
William Harborne	Marrowbone-lane	3	1	– 12 –	1 2	3 –	2 6	– 6 8	– 5 4	1	1	16	16
Thomas Ivers, sen.	Spittlefields	4	1	– 15 –	1 2	1 3	2 6	– 4 11	– 10 1	1	– –	13	15
Thomas Ivers, jun.	ditto	1	1	– 15 –	1 2	2 6	1 –	– 4 8	– 10 4	1	– –	13	17
William Irwin	Marrowbone-lane	5	2	1 5 –	2 4	3 10	3 –	– 9 2	– 15 10	2	1	13	13
James Kavanagh	ditto	5	2	1 2 –	2 4	2 7	2 6	– 7 5	– 14 7	2	– –	13	17
William M'Loughlin	Cork-street	8	2	1 10 –	2 3	3 –	3 –	– 8 3	1 1 9	2	– –	10	14
William M'Donald	Hanover-street	3	1	– 12 –	1 2	1 8	2 –	– 4 10	– 7 2	1	– –	17	14
Hugh Maguire	John-street	6	2	1 2 –	2 4	2 –	3 6	– 7 10	– 14 2	2	1	28	14
William M'Dermott	Black Pitts	4	1	– 10 –	1 2	1 3	2 –	– 4 5	– 5 7	1	– –	6	15
Charles Keely	Coombe	6	1	– 9 –	1 2	3 –	1 8	– 5 10	– 3 2	1	2	18	15
Charles O'Neill	Skinner's-alley	7	3	1 7 6	3 –	6 8	4 6	– 14 2	– 13 4	2	2	17	14
William Gilfoyle	ditto	5	2	1 7 6	2 4	2 –	3 –	– 7 4	1 – 2	2	1	26	14
John Fitzimons	ditto	3	1	– 12 –	1 4	2 8	2 4	– 6 4	– 5 8	1	2	14	14

TABINET WEAVERS.—Dublin, May 1838—*continued.*

NAMES.	RESIDENCE.	Number in Family.	Number Employed in each Family.	Total Income of each Family.	Weekly Expenses for Winding, &c.	Rent, Taxes.	Fuel, Soap, and Candles.	Total Weekly Expenses.	Clear Weekly Income for Food and Clothing.	Number of Looms Employed in each Family.	Number of Looms Unemployed in each Family.	Number of Weeks each Loom has been Idle the last 12 Months.	Number of Hours Employed each Day.
				£. s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.				
Thomas Boylan	Black Pitts	9	2	1 4 –	2 4	2 6	3 6	– 8 4	– 15 8	2	3	26	14
Christopher Elliott	New-row	2	1	– 12 –	1 2	2 –	2 –	– 5 2	– 6 10	1	– –	18	16
Philip Farrell	Chamber-street	2	1	1 – –	1 2	2 6	3 6	– 7 2	– 12 10	1	– –	26	16
Edward May	ditto	4	1	– 12 –	1 2	1 8	2 4	– 5 2	– 6 10	1	– –	15	14
Robert M'Entire	Weavers-square	5	1	– 12 –	1 2	1 8	2 4	– 5 2	– 6 10	1	– –	15	14
Francis Madden	Cork-street	1	1	1 – –	3 8	2 6	1 6	– 7 8	– 12 4	1	– –	13	15
Patrick Doyle	Coombe	2	2	1 – –	2 4	3 –	2 –	– 7 4	– 12 8	2	– –	16	14
James Kearney	Bony's-lane	12	2	1 5 –	2 4	2 6	2 –	– 6 10	– 18 2	– –	4	30	16
Michael Tobein	Black Pitts	5	1	– 14 –	1 2	1 9	1 8	– 4 7	– 9 5	1	1	17	14
Owen Dillon	Brab's-row	3	1	1 – –	1 2	2 6	2 –	– 5 8	– 14 4	1	– –	4	16
Laurence Reilly	John-street	6	1	– 10 –	1 2	1 –	2 –	– 4 2	– 5 10	1	1	30	14
William Hand	Coombe	7	2	1 – –	2 –	2 8	2 –	– 6 8	– 13 4	2	– –	26	15
Michael Armstrong	Mark's-alley	2	1	– 12 –	1 2	3 –	2 6	– 6 8	– 5 4	1	– –	20	14
Michael Brown	Cork-street	2	1	– 10 –	1 2	2 6	2 4	– 6 –	– 4 –	1	– –	26	14
Daniel Brenan	New-row	6	2	1 – –	1 2	2 6	3 –	– 6 8	– 13 4	2	– –	8	16
Thomas Beckett	Chamber-street	4	1	1 – –	1 2	2 10	3 –	– 8 –	– 12 –	1	– –	13	14
Francis Daniel	Skinner's-alley	2	1	– 12 –	1 2	2 4	1 8	– 5 2	– 6 10	1	– –	13	16
Michael Kirwan	Mw.-lane	3	1	– 15 –	3 8	1 6	2 –	– 7 2	– 7 10	1	– –	21	16
Edward Stewart	Mark's-alley	6	1	– 15 –	1 2	3 6	2 6	– 7 2	– 7 10	1	– –	13	16
George Miller	Flag-alley	6	2	1 10 –	2 4	3 6	3 –	– 8 10	1 1 2	2	– –	26	15
Peter Roach	Exchange-street	1	1	1 – –	3 8	1 8	– 8	– 6 –	– 14 –	1	– –	17	14
John Finigan	Mark's-alley	8	2	– 15 –	3 8	1 8	2 6	– 7 10	– 7 2	1	– –	16	15
John Morrin	Brown-street	4	1	– 15 –	3 8	1 8	2 –	– 7 4	– 7 8	1	– –	17	14
Andrew Whearty	Pool-street	5	2	1 5 –	2 4	2 8	2 6	– 7 8	– 17 4	2	2	26	15
Alexander Reynolds	Coombe	4	1	– 12 –	1 2	2 6	2 –	– 5 8	– 6 4	1	– –	22	14
James M'Guiness	Mark's-alley	4	1	– 14 –	1 8	2 –	2 –	– 5 8	– 8 4	1	– –	10	15
Nicholas Fitzpatrick	Coombe	3	1	– 12 –	2 8	1 4	1 8	– 5 8	– 6 4	1	– –	8	14
Amby Hollowood	Brabson-street	8	1	– 15 –	1 8	1 8	2 4	– 5 8	– 9 4	1	– –	9	15
Denis Darreen	Mark's-alley	6	2	1 5 –	1 2	2 6	3 –	– 6 8	– 18 4	1	– –	12	16
Richard Kavanagh	New-row	4	1	– 10 –	1 2	1 6	2 –	– 4 10	– 5 2	1	– –	12	14

The amount of earnings which the silk weavers may occasionally obtain from other employments I have been unable to collect. From the nature of their trade and their sedentary habits, there are few other employments for which they are fit. I met with one or two instances where silk weavers of superior education had become schoolmasters and clerks in large mercantile establishments. In juxtaposition to the return given by the weavers of their condition, must be placed the evidence of the manufacturers. Mr. Gheoghegan, who employs 90 tabinet looms, states, "the lowest wages 6¼*d.* per yard for weaving, the highest 8¼*d.* on plain goods. The wages for weaving jacquard goods is 1*s.* per yard, which I consider higher in proportion than that paid for plain goods. I am of opinion that no more skill is required in the weaver to make figured poplins than to make plain ones, since jacquard machines have been used.

* * * * * *

"A good workman can, I conceive, make 30 yards of each description in the week, by working 13 or 14 hours per day; but I would say that this is rather too high for a general average, 25 yards per week being about the average quantity. A young person from 15 to 17 can weave poplins as well as an adult."

I have known a young girl under 20, who worked for Mr. Gheoghegan, to earn 37 *l.* in ten months, and this within the last year. Mr. Atkinson, tabinet manufacturer to the Queen and the Irish court, who has brought the manufacture of embroidered and brocaded poplins to the highest perfection, specimens of which I submit to the Commissioners, states, "I employ 50 hand-loom weavers of Irish poplins or tabinets; to these I give constant work, I do not wish to employ at any time more hands than I can give constant work to; occasionally the men may be a few days (three or four) waiting for work, from the delay of dyers, winders, warpers. The earnings of these 50 weavers depend in a great degree on the description of the piece they are required to weave, such as plain, figured or brocaded. The price per yard for weaving of the plain tabinets vary according to the count or number of threads of silk in each piece of warp, from 6¼*d.* to 8¼*d.* per yard. I think a good workman could make 25 yards of each of these kinds of plain tabinets. They are paid for figured goods 1*s.* a yard; a good workman can readily make of these, on a jacquard loom, 24 yards in the week. The brocaded tabinets vary considerably as to the price paid for their weaving, from 1*s.* 3*d.* to 6*s.* a yard. These include those shot with gold and silver plate; out of the 50 weavers I employ there are not more than 15 or 20 to whom I could entrust to make gold brocade. A weaver whom I would employ on gold brocades, if he had constant work, could earn much more than those employed on plain or figured tabinets. The weavers on brocaded tabinets can earn from 25*s.* to 28*s.* per week. I think for the last two years the hand-loom weavers on the plain tabinets could earn from 10*s.* to 15*s.* per week, those on figured from 20*s.* to 24*s.*, those on the brocaded from 25*s.* to 28*s.* We are subject to considerable fluctuations in the tabinet trade. In the January of 1837, the demand was low, and I was obliged to part with some of my weavers, and to spread the work I had to give out over a larger number. I did not lower the rate of wages, as the weavers in no case allow of this. * * * * * *. The hand-loom weavers employed by me on tabinets are now in as good a condition, and able to earn as much as at any period I remember since I entered the trade (28 years ago)."

Wages, figured.

Brocaded.

Wages, brocaded goods, 25*s.* to 28*s.* per week.

Plain, 10*s.* to 15*s.*
Figured, 20*s.* to 24*s.*

One of the deputation appointed by the silk weavers to give evidence (Becket), states, "that his earnings for the last three years to have been 1*l.* a week for 1836, and 14*s.* for 1837 and 1838; yet that, although this has been his earnings, cannot be taken as a fair average of the earnings of the trade as a whole, not from his being a peculiarly good workman, but from being fortunate in getting a high-priced fabric to weave, and constant employment. All weavers, speaking generally, at the trade, are sufficiently skilled to make up the different fabrics on which they are employed. That the earnings of the weavers depend, not so much on their skill, as upon the description of work they get to do. The difference in the price paid for weaving plain and figured goods, arises from the increased outlay required in getting the weaving machinery for the one over the other." He also states, "That for the last three years he has, on the average, been kept waiting for work 10 weeks in each year, and that the average period the trade is kept idle is 13 weeks in each year, but the fluctuations in our trade causes great difficulty in striking this average. I have known cases where three-fourths

Three yrs. average, 1*l.* a week in 1836, 14*s.* a week since.

Wages not so much affected by skill as by difference of fabric and outlay of capital on machinery.

Kept idle 10 weeks in the year; 13 the average for the trade.

Three-fourths of the whole trade idle 6 or 7 weeks.
Occurs periodically in Summer.
Glad to get any employment.
Work in the park.

fourths of the silk weavers have been, for six or seven weeks, totally idle; the period at which this cessation generally occurs is during the summer, and is almost periodical. The whole silk trade having left Dublin, and the tabinet being a winter fabric, is the principal cause. During these seasons of want of work, the silk weavers are ready to take any employment, but there is none for them to get, except such as may be opened expressly for them by the authorities, such as the works in the park last year. During the time that the weavers were employed as labourers in the park, on the works opened for them, the larger portion of them were in constant employment at their own trade, and there was no variation in the rate of wages." This circumstance of a portion of a trade working as common labourers on work provided for them to save them from starvation, proceeds from the trade regulations, which forbid a reduction of wages. The deputation, in another portion of their evidence, states, in reference to this subject, " Sudden changes in the demand for our labour does not cause fluctuations in our rates of wages. Wages are regulated between the masters and workmen by printed schedules, and alterations in these schedules do not occur excepting when great alterations take place; for in ordinary changes we seek no advance in wages, nor do the manufacturers take advantage in ordinary dearths of business to reduce our wages. The alteration in our wages would not increase the time of our employment; the reason why this is the case is, that tabinets, being an article worn almost exclusively by the nobility and gentry, and for a limited time of the year, the article becomes unsaleable during the other portion of the year; therefore any reduction we could make in our wages would not affect the quantity consumed." It was also stated by the deputation, that " the weavers work 15 hours per day; that the deductions attendant on the weavers making the piece, independent of loom-hire, were 1*s.* a week for winding, and 6*d.* a week for light. Those of the weavers who have hired looms pay 1*s.* 6*d.* a week for the hire of a plain loom, 2*s.* 6*d.* for the hire of a jacquard. About 40 silk weavers work in factories, who pay 1*s.* 6*d.* a week for the hire of a plain loom, and 2*s.* 6*d.* for a jacquard. The expense of winding and light is common to all, and stands the silk weavers, on an average, 1*s.* 6*d.* a week each. There are about 20 or 30 silk weavers who occasionally work with undertakers as jobbers, and pay 1*s.* 6*d.* for a plain, and 2*s.* 6*d.* for a jacquard loom. * * * *

No variation wages.
Reason why.
Wages regulated by schedules.
Changes seldom made.
Why.
Period of work each day.
Expenses attendant on the weaving of a web.
Hire of looms.
Number of weavers who work as jobbers.

" The families of weavers are dependent on the earnings of the weaver, or on their own earnings, in occupations dependent upon weaving. The weavers generally bring up their children to weaving, or to some branch of business connected with weaving." O'Hanlon, one of the deputation, states, " my family consists of my wife and four children, girls, ages 21, 17, 14, and 9; my eldest daughter is an engine-winder, my next girl enters the warps through the harness and reeds, she is able to earn at this, for an average of the last three years, 2*s.* 6*d.* per week, this business is casual and fluctuating; my next girl of 14 is an apprentice at silk-winding, but earns nothing at present. I am obliged to give at least three months of her labour in the shape of an apprentice fee."

Families of weavers dependent on weaving.
Weavers bring up their children as weavers.
Earnings of the family of a silk weaver.

The trade of weaving whole silk is almost extinct; the few looms employed on velvets 26 or 30, are not able to obtain work for more than nine months in the year. While employed, the weavers are able to earn 15*s.* a week, out of which there is 6*d.* a week to be deducted for winding, and 1*s.* 6*d.* for loom hire when the weaver has not a loom of his own, as is generally the case with the velvet weavers.

Whole silk trade almost extinct.
Velvet looms.
Earnings of velvet weavers.

In the ribbon trade there are not more than 32 engines engaged, and these are only partially employed. The earnings of the weavers per week amount to from 8*s.* to 10*s.* There are also seven single-hand ribbon looms on which the weavers are able to earn 4*s.* a week. The single-hand ribbon weavers are represented as in great distress, a large proportion of them in the Mendicity, and that many of them rise up daily without knowing how they may be able to obtain food during the day. The single-hand ribbon weavers were thrown out of employment by the introduction of the ribbon-engine loom.

Ribbon trade.
Earnings of ribbon weavers.
Earnings of single-hand ribbon weavers.
Distress.
Cause.

Having thus far treated of the extent of the silk trade in Dublin and the pecuniary condition of the weavers, I would now lay before the Commissioners the past state of the trade as given in evidence, and the causes to which its decline has been attributed, and then state what I consider to have been its real condition, and the causes to which I attribute its decline.

Statement as to the silk trade in 1775.

It is stated in a paper given in evidence by one of the deputation from the silk trade, that in the year 1775 the trade was in a very prosperous condition, and that there were in employment at that time, and producing a comfortable means

of

of subsistence to the weaver, 3,400 looms, which also gave employment to 1,700 winders, 200 female throwsters, at 6*s.* a week, 340 dyers, and 200 quill-winders and draw-boys, making a total of 5,840 persons employed. This statement I am led to believe is greatly exaggerated, and I am of opinion that the silk trade of Dublin never was in the flourishing condition described in the evidence of the weavers. I find it stated by Arthur Young that the imported fabrics had increased for the 26 years previous to 1777, while the raw material worked up had decreased, a proof that the manufacture was in no very healthy condition; and I find that in the year 1777 the Royal Dublin Society, which had established a warehouse for the sale of silk in Ireland, wholesale and retail, had only a stock to the amount of 12,000 *l.* in hand, and that from the 23d of June 1777 to 7th February 1778, their average weekly receipts was only 150*l.*, or, per annum, 7,800*l.*, although they offered and paid a premium of three per cent. on all wrought silk bought by wholesale at their warehouse to be sold again. I cannot think, under these circumstances, that the trade was in a healthy condition, or that it gave profitable employment to 5,840 individuals when such absurd measures were deemed necessary for its protection and promotion. Had the trade been in a flourishing condition, I do not think it could have long continued so, when a public body took away from the manufacturers and mercers that share of profit, and consequently that skilful and active superintendence, the results of self-interest, upon which the existence and advance of all manufactures depend.

Weavers of Ireland. Silk Trade.

Number of persons employed.

This statement exaggerated.

It appears from documentary evidence, that in 1784 there were only 800 silk looms at work, and that on the 21st of June 1793 the working silk manufacturers petitioned the Legislature, and stated that although in 1791 there were 1,200 silk looms employed, yet in that year there were not nine-tenths of those employed, and that the silk manufacturers, weavers, and other individuals depending on that trade for support, were reduced to the greatest possible distress.

The trade was altogether suspended by the rebellion in 1798, and in 1800 it was found necessary to protect it by a duty of 10 per cent. on the introduction of foreign and British silks. Under the Spitalfields Act the regulation of wages and disputes between masters and workmen had been subjected to the control of the Royal Dublin Society. It is stated in the Report on the trade, by the Committee of Silk Weavers, "that in 1805 the last rise in wages took place; that, in 1809, they suffered much by the Berlin decrees, which had the effect of raising the price of raw silk to an enormous height, so as to prevent the manufacturer from purchasing it; that the weavers were thrown out of employment and enlisted; that from this period succeeding depressions diminished their numbers, and the silk trade, extending itself in England, and being established at Macclesfield and Manchester, where higher wages were paid than at Spitalfields or Dublin, still further reduced the number of silk weavers; and that, notwithstanding the protecting duties, the English manufacturers were, by their increased command of capital, able to undersell the Dublin manufacturer. To this circumstance they mainly attribute the loss of the silk trade. But they say that when the protecting duties began to expire in 1821, and the drawback on home manufactured goods was taken off, and steam communication opened with England, the market was inundated with goods during the panic of 1825, at a price less than the cost of the raw material; and that thus the loss of the silk trade was rendered inevitable. It is also stated that in all these changes, the silk weavers suffered more in the decline of numbers than in the reduction of wages, as, up to 1824, their wages were protected by the Royal Dublin Society. At this period the weavers made a reduction of 15 per cent. on the price of weaving (whole silk). Yet after all the sacrifices that were made, the effort proved unavailing to preserve the trade in whole silks. The English were able to pour their silk goods into Ireland at a price below that for which they could be manufactured in Dublin.

I find that the value of raw and organzine silk, imported into Ireland in 1790 amounted in value to 96,130 *l.*, in 1791 to 81,413 *l.*, in 1792 to 112,589 *l.*, in 1793 to 101,665 *l.*, in 1794 to 25,293 *l.*, in 1795 to 51,930 *l.*, in 1796 to 88,130 *l.*, in 1797 to 67,300 *l.*, in 1798 to 42,292 *l.*, in 1799 to 63,620 *l.*, in 1800 to 78,451 *l.*, in 1801 to 43,659 *l.*, in 1802 to 45,282 *l.*, in 1803 to 74,423 *l.*, in 1804 to 54,334 *l.*, in 1805 to 93,103 *l.*, in 1806 to 67,222 *l.*, in 1807 to 53,255 *l.*, in 1808 to 72,301 *l.*, in 1809 to 34,831 *l.*, in 1810 to 57,100 *l.*, in 1811 to 71,203 *l.* In 1813 I find the number of pounds imported to be 104,186; in 1817, 60,094 lbs.; in 1821, 58,729 lbs.; in 1825, 62,128 lbs. From what has been stated it will be perceived that the silk trade in Ireland,

No returns have been made since 1825.

Weavers of Ireland. Silk Trade. — Report of C. G. Otway, Esq.

from the period of 1775, has never been extensive or in a prosperous condition, but has been subject to continual fluctuations. The actual earnings of the weavers at progressive periods since that time, I have not been able to obtain accurately, but the prices fixed at the different periods by the Royal Dublin Society, taken into consideration with the number of yards a good silk or tabinet weaver can weave in the week, will make up for this deficiency. On taking into account the price of provisions, the former inferiority of the looms, the state in which the raw material was supplied, it will, I imagine, be found that the weavers now employed on the manufacture of tabinets are nearly as well off now, as to their pecuniary earnings, as they have been at any period since the establishment of the trade. The number of weavers employed at different periods, since the year 1793, I have no accurate data to reckon from, but the value and number of pounds of raw silk imported will enable a general conclusion to be drawn.

It is, however, evident that the silk trade in Dublin has decreased, and, whatever may be the exaggerations, as to its former state, that it is now confined to the manufacture of one fabric, the tabinets. There can be no doubt that the trade in weaving whole silk is extinct, and that the manufactures of velvets, handkerchiefs, and ribbons, are reduced to a few looms. The decline of the trade is attributed to various causes, both by operatives and employers. Lamb, a weaver, attributes it "to the introduction of English and French silks, duty free, and the want of a public market-place, where the weavers might send their goods for sale." J. Kelly, both an operative and employer, "to the repeal of the protecting duties, and the want of capital; the duty on thrown silk, and the high price of provisions, caused by the Corn Laws, and the more particularly to the effects of combinations on the part of the weavers." This, he states, is the great cause of the decline of the trade. "The effects of combinations is one of the great causes of the downfal of the trade and consequent distress. A man of the name of M'Connell, a silk-manufacturer, who carried on the trade to a great extent, had a quantity of work going on, and made an agreement with his men, in one branch of the business, to get it done for less than the standard price. The body of the trade got information of it, and stopped his works; would not allow the men to fulfil their engagements; called a meeting, and ordered all his work home (*i. e.* the work he had out in the looms), unfinished, and fined him 10 *l.* for committing that crime against their will. They would not suffer him to proceed with his business until he agreed to pay the fine, and the full price in future for all the work out. He paid the fine, and got his work finished, and, when it was finished, quitted the trade. So disgusted was he with the conduct of the men, and the fearful effects of such a system of combination. "I myself," said he, "about nine months ago, made an agreement with men (who solicited me) to give them work under the usual price, trade being remarkably low. The body got information, and called a general meeting on that business, and came to the unanimous resolution at the meeting that no person, for the future, should work for me. These resolutions were passed, and in a few nights after my works were consumed, by vitriol thrown in through the windows by unknown persons, and no person connected with the trade would work for me for fear of the body. Informations were lodged against 11 persons, by men who worked with me at the time, and they were tried in about five months after for combination; but in consequence of the terror exercised by the body over the persons who lodged the informations before the magistrate, the witnesses, on the trial, swore the direct contrary of the very informations they had given before the magistrate. They were then indicted for perjury. The effect of all this was to drive me from the business. The unions in my trade have regular officers, meetings, and collections to support their combinations. They would not allow me, though having served my full time to the ribbon trade, to work at the broad silk, though in every respect the same, except one being broad and the other narrow; a great hardship this; and as a manufacturer they would not allow me to take an apprentice at it. I look upon the system of combination which exists as one of the great causes of the decline of the trade. A few individuals frame a system of rules and laws, and call themselves 'a common committee,' tax the whole trade for their purposes, and enforce their laws and their system of taxation on the trade, the majority of whom are totally ignorant of their proceedings, and have no voice in the framing of their laws, but are obliged, from fear, to submit to the laws of this committee. The committee men are generally composed of leading undertakers of work, who give it out as well as weave it; and so they have th

Combinations among operatives.

Their injurious effects.

Mode in which combinations are managed.

the less forward and more humble workmen in their power by these means. The principal leaders of this body are generally great spokesmen, and are always sure of getting themselves in the first instance appointed on the committee by self-election. Part of the combination committee of each trade is in connexion with a general combination committee or body of all trades. To this each trade that has formed a body or a union sends its delegates; and generally, when any of their laws are to be enforced against any one who has come under their displeasure, the person to punish and the punishment is pronounced and awarded by persons connected with totally different pursuits and trades. This connexion with a general body of all trades is denied by the silk weavers; but though I cannot speak of it from personal knowledge, as I can of their own system of combination and its fearful effects, still I am fully persuaded and convinced of the truth of it."

General combination committee of all trades.

Lamb, a ribbon weaver, "attributes the decline to want of capital to compete with England, the withdrawal of the protecting duties, and the undue advantage which the poor-rates in England, as a partial payment of wages, gave the English." Flood, a ribbon weaver, attributes the decline of the trade to power-looms, and that ribbons are now made by steam so cheap, that to make them at the same price by hand would not be worth any one's while; he could not live by it. Also to the introduction of the engine-loom, by which many ribbons are woven at the same. The consequence is that where there were 1,000 figured ribbon looms about 35 years ago, there are not two. Becket, a tabinet weaver, and one of the deputation appointed to give evidence, attributes the decline and distress in the trade to "the sudden changes the tabinet trade is subject to from depending on the fashions, which create sudden rises in the demand for their labour; to power-looms, which though not used in weaving silks in Dublin, yet caused an increase of hands at the silk weaving, and was one of the causes of the withdrawal of the trade in whole silks from Dublin."

In the statement of the trade, handed in by the committee of silk weavers, the cause of the decline of the trade is attributed "to the superiority of England in her capital and machinery, which enabled her to undersell the Irish manufacturer; to a repeal of the prohibitory duties, and the protection afforded them by the Royal Dublin Society, under the Spitalfields Act, and to the introduction of the principles of free trade, from which time the trade in whole silk declined in Dublin at a railroad pace."

The following causes are assigned for the decline of the silk trade by the master manufacturers. By Mr. M'Intire, "to the effects of the union, and the consequent withdrawal of a large number of consumers, the withdrawal of the protecting duties in 1826, want of capital, from which the Irish are driven out of even the home market, from the superiority of English capital and enterprise." Mr. Gheoghegan states, "that he is not aware of any peculiar causes affecting the hand-loom weavers in his branch of trade (poplin), which did not operate alike on all the other labouring classes of the community, and thinks that the distress to which the hand-loom weavers in his department have been occasionally subject, has arisen from the want of demand for the article they manufacture." He also states "that the hand-loom weavers, during periods of employment and prosperity, have not been sufficiently provident, and that many have neglected to save money at those periods who might have done so." Mr. Atkinson, tabinet manufacturer, attributes the decline of the silk trade to the want of capital and to the withdrawal of the protecting duties, which caused the English goods to come in and undersell the Irish manufacturer. * * That in 1826, owing to the failures in England, goods were produced at half-price, and that having a large stock he was obliged to sell his goods at a very great loss, owing to the influx of English silks at a very reduced price. * * Also, that owing to the former system of English poor-laws, the manufacturers could make goods cheaper in England. He also attributes the decline of the trade to the tardiness of the weavers to reduce their wages, although they did after some time reduce them somewhat towards the Manchester scale of prices. But it would have been better for the trade if done sooner. If at wholesale, he could have sold his goods cheaper; wholesale buyers would have bought more largely. The detention of work by the weavers, and the want of a law to protect silk manufacturers from this circumstance, and any injury their goods may receive in the loom, operates most injuriously on the trade. He has 40*s.* worth of silk quite useless, and has no remedy; and though the silk was spoiled by the winders oiling it, the winders are threatening to compel him to pay for the winding.

Weavers of Ireland. Silk Trade.

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Alderman Abbott, for many years one of the most extensive silk manufacturers and mercers in Dublin, states: "I am acquainted with the state of the silk trade for the last 50 years. When I remember it first it was flourishing, and gave employment to a large number of individuals, consisting of silk throwsters, dyers, winders, warpers, weavers, and dressers; even as far back as I can remember considerable fluctuations took place in the trade, but were merely temporary, occasioned by the wear of muslins and other fabrics. Up to 1829 I was engaged in the wholesale silk trade, employing a large number of looms; imported my own silk, and had it manufactured here. I left the trade in consequence of the combinations amongst the workmen. I called my weavers together, and they agreed to make a considerable reduction in the price of weaving; when they got the work out for the winter's trade, the committee of the combinators took the shuttles from them, and would not allow them to finish their work in the looms until I agreed to give the full London prices; in consequence of which, I did not think it safe any longer to continue in the trade, and I retired from business. This occurred in the year 1826. The weavers were accustomed to fix the prices of weaving; and, as I stated before, I called them together and told them, as the facility was so great for getting goods from England, and the protecting duty being taken off, that I could not with safety give them the London prices. I manufactured every thing that could be made, from silk velvets, ribbons, &c. &c. &c. I believe there are very few silk weavers here now, except the tabinet weavers. I attribute the withdrawal of the trade in whole silks to the combinations of the men, who would not work at Manchester prices, but insisted on London prices, which the manufacturer here could not afford to give."

Combinations.

Their effects.

The Commissioners will perceive that the causes assigned for the decline of the trade in Dublin, would, in most cases, equally apply to the manufacture of silk in the other parts of the United Kingdom, and no reason is shown why these should peculiarly affect the trade in Dublin. If causes have been assigned for the decline of the silk trade in Dublin, which have not produced the effects attributed to them in cases to which they were equally applicable, we must look for and take into consideration the other causes which peculiarly bear on and affect the silk trade in Ireland. Of these, the repeal of the protecting duties, as far as they were peculiar to Ireland, is the first. The history of the trade in Dublin, which has been already glanced at, will show that in proportion as bounties and protections decreased, the silk trade increased; that in 1793, when the protecting duties were at the highest, the trade was at the lowest ebb; that when these duties were reduced to 10 per cent. from 30, the trade increased. In 1805, according to the evidence of the deputation of weavers, wages were at the maximum, and it appears that, in 1813, when a further reduction of the duties had taken place, 104,186 lbs. of raw silk had been imported into Ireland, whereas, in 1801, there were only 60,030. In 1815 there was as large a quantity of silk goods imported as was manufactured in the country, notwithstanding the prohibitory duties on the importation of wrought silks, and the fact that the Irish manufacturer paid less duty on organzine silk than the London merchant.

It does not appear that those individuals who attribute the decline of the silk trade to the repeal of the protecting duties, have given any reasons, or shown any cause, why the Irish silk trade requires peculiar legislative protection, or what are the disadvantages under which it labours. It is not stated why the manufacture of silk ought not to be carried on in Dublin as profitably as in the other parts of the kingdom where trade is free.

The destructive effects of combinations amongst the operatives is strongly stated in the evidence of J. Kelly and Alderman Abbott, for many years the most extensive silk-mercer and manufacturer in Ireland. Their evidence on this subject I have quoted at length; it is a matter to which I cannot too strongly direct the attention of the Commissioners. It cannot be doubted that illegal and dangerous combinations amongst the workmen have operated most injuriously on the trade, driven many of the most extensive manufacturers out of it, and deterred others from directing that capital and intelligence towards it, by which alone it could be preserved or enabled to compete with the other silk-weaving districts of the empire. If not checked, this system will speedily drive away the portion of the silk trade which now remains.

Combinations.

The day or two previous to my leaving Ireland, I called on a manufacturer of high respectability, and the head of one of the oldest houses in the trade, who had

had previously (last May) given me evidence. He told me that since I had examined him, he had set up a hand-loom weaving factory for broad silks; had gone to England and expended a sum of 700*l.* in purchasing Jacquard-looms of the best construction, and a machine for winding silk. He took me to see his factory. I found it the best arranged, and the most healthy and convenient factory I had ever seen; but out of upwards of 30 looms, only 12 were at work, and the winding-machine appeared never to have been used. I asked the reason of this; he told me, when he had finished his arrangements there was a meeting of the body of the trade called, and that they had passed a resolution not to allow more than 12 weavers to work for him, and he was directed not, on any account, to use the winding-machine: "The consequence is, sir, that although I give the same rate of wages as that fixed by the union, if I was to give 100*l.* as an inducement, I could not get a thirteenth weaver to work for me. But this is not all; they passed another resolution forbidding the 12 weavers to pay me more than 1*s.* 6*d.* each for the use of the looms, though 2*s.* 6*d.* is the fixed price, when the manufacturer supplies a Jacquard-loom; and to-morrow there is to be a meeting of the trade to limit the number of weavers that they will permit to work for me to six. The other manufacturers are either afraid or unwilling to assist me to put down this combination. The consequence is, that after sustaining immense loss, I must withdraw from the trade. The silk-winders are so exasperated at my introducing a winding-machine, though I never used it, that I dare not, even in the open day, walk through the liberty, the very women would pelt me with stones or mud."

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Combinations.

Instance of their effects.

The combinations of the operatives have not only driven the most extensive and wealthy manufacturers out of the trade, but, by the unjust and illegal control which they assume over the industry of their fellow-workmen, they have compelled them to emigrate to some place where they can exercise their judgment as regards the disposal of their own labour. The consequence has been, that many of the best Irish silk weavers, sooner than submit to such a tyranny, have from time to time migrated to Manchester and other silk-weaving districts of England, where they have been glad to get employment at a much lower rate than that fixed by the trade in Dublin. There are in fact more Irish workmen now in Macclesfield than English. Mr. Curran, the secretary of the Manchester silk weavers, in his evidence, stated, "After the Spitalfields Act was repealed, the silk weavers in Dublin combined not to take lower wages from their employers than they had previously received; and numbers came over here, where in many instances they were obliged to take a lower rate of wages than the rules of their trade in Dublin would permit. This had the effect of withdrawing a large portion of the trade from Dublin, and opening a market in Dublin for the Manchester silks, which more than compensated for the increase in the labour market, from the additional number of silk weavers that had migrated from Dublin." It was also stated in evidence received by the Poor Law Inquiry Commissioners for Ireland, from a silk manufacturer: "I have lately seen some of the weavers who went from here to Macclesfield; many of them told me they should be glad to return home and work for half their present wages." And again: "If I were to set up 50 or 60 fresh looms to work, a meeting of the weavers would immediately take place to consider if they would work at the prices I should offer them; at first they would consent, and as soon as everything was prepared for them, I have no doubt but that they would strike and leave me in the lurch, and thus, through their own obstinacy, continue to linger in a state of almost starvation, rather than work under the prices they had themselves fixed upon." The Dublin silk weavers require each weaver, before he can be allowed to work, to have served a regular apprenticeship: the limit is seven years. Becket, one of the deputation, states in his evidence, "Weavers serve a regular apprenticeship. The widows and daughters of weavers are permitted to weave, if they can do so; though the trade does not allow of more than two daughters of a weaver to weave. Each weaver is allowed to take two apprentices, which we consider sufficient for keeping up the numbers which the trade requires."

Compel silk weaver to emigrate to England.

Effects of their emigration.

Combinations.

Limitation of apprentices.

The remedies proposed were those which I shall now enumerate: In the statements of the trade drawn up by the committee of the silk weavers, the weavers "express their full confidence in the wisdom and benevolence of the Legislature; and their fear that, from their limited information and partial knowledge, they could not themselves tell what would better their condition; they, however, specify

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specify some measures which in their opinion would effectually remove the evils of which they complain, and give the weavers what is their natural right, and the climax of their ambition, constant employment, and a just compensation for it. They first propose a total repeal, or such a modification of the Corn Laws as would improve the condition of the manufacturing population, whose interests and rights they state should not be forgotten by their rulers. Next, they ask for a Wages protection bill, such a one as would secure to them an equivalent for their labour amid any alterations that might take place in the markets; one which would not be local in its application, as the Spitalfields Act was, but would extend over the United Kingdom. They also state that they think a board of trade, consisting of employers and workmen, established in any locality for the purpose of fixing a minimum rate of wages for a definite period, that minimum to be changed by the same board as often as circumstances would call for a change, would be a great advantage; or if the Government would give them a graduated scale of wages, regulated by the fluctuations which might occur in the necessaries of life, or by some means secure to the labourer the fair reward for his labour, and prevent some employers taking advantage of men's necessities in a dearth of trade, that their state would be greatly improved. Thirdly, they propose a limitation to the produce of machinery, either by a tax on the quantity produced by power, or by contracting the number of the hours per day that machinery works.

"Fourthly, they ask for a duty on the introduction of silks into Ireland, and a repeal of the duties which prohibit the admission of their mixed goods into France; encouragement of the produce of their looms by obtaining for them the patronage of the court and the nobility. Fifthly, a loan of 50,000 *l.* or 60,000 *l.*, to be advanced on proper security to some qualified persons, so as to enable them to procure the advantages which the English capitalists have."

The Commissioners will perceive that most of these proposed remedies are quite inapplicable to the actual circumstances of the trade and the country, and that some of them would tend to defeat rather than promote the object for which they are recommended.

Having thus stated the causes assigned by both employers and operatives for the decline, and the remedies proposed to revive the silk trade in Dublin, I would submit to the Commissioners the conclusions which appear to me to result from the evidence laid before me, and from the experience I have acquired.

It appears from what has been already stated, taking the mean between the statements of the employers and operatives, that the earnings of the hand-loom silk weavers of Dublin, for the average of the last three years, amount to from 12 *s.* to 15 *s.* a week on each loom, deducting the average periods they have been kept waiting for work, and deducting the expenses of room-hire, light, and winding. This rate of earnings is as high, if not higher, than those of any class of weavers in the United Kingdom. Considering the low rate of earnings of the great majority of the labouring classes in Ireland, and the fluctuations to which all classes of labourers are exposed, the silk weavers of Dublin are in a much better condition, as to the amount of their pecuniary earnings, than the great mass of their fellow workpeople, and have, according to the terms of the Commissioners' instructions, no "claim to any interference in their behalf beyond the general and impartial superintendence which the Legislature ought to extend to every class of Her Majesty's subjects."

From the limited demand for tabinets, owing to the expensive nature of the fabric, and its almost total dependance on the caprice of fashion, there is no temptation held out for embarking new capital in its manufacture, and there is at present little competition in its sale. Purchasers are dissuaded from all attempts to obtain a reduction of price, by representations of the charitable effect that is to result from buying Irish tabinets. It is considered patriotic, and a genteel mode of bestowing charity, to purchase a few yards of this material. Unenlightened charity and despotic fashion combine to maintain the delusion. The trade is constantly trembling on the verge of ruin; and the manufacturers would long since have been unable to continue to pay the present rate of wages to the weaver, and remain in the trade, but for the continual appeals made to public benevolence, and the prevalent belief that the loss, even of a trade thus artificially supported, would, under the present circumstances of Ireland, be a public calamity.

From the ill-judged interference on the part both of the Legislature and the operatives, which mark the history of the silk trade in Dublin, it has never been

able

able to attain that healthy condition which would enable it to compete with its less indulged rivals, or which would enable it to prevent or recover from the injurious effects of the combinations and trade regulations by which the short-sighted operative endeavoured to prop it. The protective duties granted at the Union, and the effects of the regulation of a rate of wages by the Dublin Society, prevented the industry of the silk weavers from being exercised, or a due regard being paid to economy, and the manufacturer trusted to his protective duties rather than to his own energy and skill. The high price of the fabric, added to the change in the fashions, induced the substitution of other fabrics. It was not until after the protecting duties were withdrawn, that the use of silk became general among the middle classes. It was confined to the higher and wealthy classes of society, whose numbers were very limited, and it was considered as a distinctive mark of wealth and station. The manufacturer was exposed to constant vicissitudes, and the history of the trade was that of one continued series of rises and falls. The only article which was able to maintain a demand, either in the home or foreign markets, was the poplin, which trade was not affected by the protective duties.

The protecting duties being removed and trade left free, the injurious combinations of the operatives being prevented, which from the value of the raw material is the more peculiarly injurious in the silk trade, I do not see why the silk trade in Dublin, under more enlightened conduct on the part of the Legislature, the employers, and the operatives, should not be revived. The Irish silk trade ought, under proper management, to afford as ample employment and profit (according to the capital invested in it) to those engaged in the various operations requisite for its manufacture, as are enjoyed by those engaged in the manufacture of silk in any other portion of the United Kingdom.

The moral condition of the silk weavers of Dublin, considering the alternations of prosperity and adversity to which they have been exposed, I believe to be as high as that of any other class of their fellow tradesmen in Ireland. The want of forethought and the improvidence which pervade all classes of operatives in the Irish metropolis is productive of the most injurious effects. From the depressions to which their trade is subject, they are, it appears, thrown out of employment, taking the average of the last three years, for from two to three months in each year. The wages received during the period of employment, with frugality, should enable them to provide against these depressions of their trade, and, if equally divided, would afford an adequate means of subsistence throughout each year. Yet, on the recurrence of these stagnations, they are unable to meet them, and maintain themselves by going in debt, or by having recourse to the pawn office. During a renewal of employment they are seldom able to clear themselves before another stagnation occurs, which they are in a worse position to meet. Thus, from want of abstinence and forethought, and the fluctuations between full employment and total idleness, they are involved in a circle of evils reproducing and increasing each other, until they are left in such a state as to be reduced, on the slightest fluctuation or depression in their trade, to a condition of absolute starvation. They present continually the deplorable spectacle of a body of able and skilful tradesmen, with large families looking to them for support, whose average yearly earnings ought to be sufficient for their maintenance, reduced to the necessity of depending for their supply of the necessaries of life on the bounty of their friends, or on the unprofitable charity of the public.

The influence of this state of things on the morals of the silk weavers, it is unnecessary for me to point out; yet, under these circumstances, neither from evidence or personal investigation into their condition, taken as a body, can dishonesty, intemperance, or idleness be laid to their charge. The only class of hand-loom weavers against which I have received no evidence, under the head of embezzlement, is the silk weavers of Dublin, although the temptation to this crime, from the value and portability of the raw material committed to their charge, is, I need not state, one to which they are peculiarly liable. As to the intellectual and educational state of the silk weavers, I consider them to be a most intelligent body, and, as far as having received, when children, the rudiments of education, reading, writing, and arithmetic go, the best educated class of weavers I have met. I know no other class of tradesmen, as a body, superior to them in these respects. A larger portion of children from the parochial schools, and other educational institutions, were formerly apprenticed to the silk

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trade than to any other, which will, in a great degree, account for this circumstance.

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As to the extent of their knowledge with reference to their own trade, I consider them well acquainted with the nature and principles of the machinery and implements they employ, and the means of improving them. But as to the number or the accessibleness of the markets for their labour, the means of bettering their condition, the rates of wages paying in the other silk districts of the empire, the laws by which their trade and all trades are regulated, the position in which they stand as compared to other classes of their own trade, or the other operatives of the kingdom, they are perfectly ignorant. They are ignorant of their rights as well as their duties. They know not how far their condition depends on their own conduct, their employers, or on causes over which neither they or their employers can have control. Hence proceed the combinations; hence, in a great degree, the improvidence and want of forethought, the results of which it has been my painful duty to detail.

They have no money to buy books; there are no book societies to which they can subscribe; they do not frequent mechanics' institutions, because there are none to frequent. If they have any desire for intellectual occupation or improvement, they have no means of gratifying it; and this very desire, which must be satisfied with good or evil, in the absence of the means for obtaining the one, must be supplied by the other.

As to the extent to which the children of the weavers frequent schools, I give tables in my evidence books, answering the different heads of my instructions on this subject, as far as information was capable of being acquired. It must appear how inadequate (in many cases) the description of schools frequented, the ages of the children, or the length of time which their parents permit them to remain at school, are for conferring a permanent or useful education, or enabling them to perform their duty in their station.

In the personal examination of those children which I have been able to make, in few instances have I found either the quantity or the quality of education they had acquired, or were likely to acquire, such as would be calculated to be of permanent use to them in after life.

On the part of the weavers I have found, in most cases, a desire to give their children an education; but imperfect reading and writing, and a knowledge of the elements of arithmetic, comprise their notions of this term. Even this desire is seldom sufficiently strong to cause them to forego any immediate advantage which the labour of their children may afford, and it is exercised only towards those whose tender ages render them incapable of affording any profitable labour; consequently it excludes those very individuals to whom mental cultivation is most applicable and most wanting.

Linen Trade.

Linen Trade.

The general state of the linen trade has been already slightly noticed, and some of the circumstances, which are to be taken into account in forming a due estimate of its present state, have been glanced at. Its early history is involved in the same obscurity as that of the other manufactures of Ireland. A Committee of the Irish House of Commons endeavoured to elucidate its use and progress, but the information collected was vague and unsatisfactory, and does not tend to throw much light, available for present useful purposes, on the subject. It was found that the linen trade was enumerated as one of the principal branches of Irish manufacture in the 33d of Henry the 8th, 1542, and a law was passed to prevent forestalling by the grey yarn merchants. This Act was revived by the 11th of Elizabeth, and clauses added, prohibiting the steeping of hemp or flax in rivers; and by the 13th of Elizabeth all persons were prohibited from exporting flax and linen, except merchants living in cities and boroughs; and by another Act, in the same year, a duty of 12*d.* a pound was imposed on all flax or linen yarn exported, and 8 *d.* additional for the use of the town from which it was exported. In this Act it was recited, that Irish merchants had been exporters of these articles for more than 100 years. By subsequent Acts and proclamations, during the reigns of Charles the 1st and 2d, particular attention was

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was paid to these manufactures, from which is evident that the kingdom possessed an export trade in such commodities at these early periods.

From the measures adopted by the Earl of Strafford to encourage the linen manufacture, its establishment has generally been attributed to him. He sent to Holland for flax-seed, and to the Netherlands for competent workmen. The flax was sown, and succeeded according to expectation. Spinners and looms were set to work; and his Lordship, to animate others, embarked himself in the business 30,000 *l.* of his private fortune. But the troubles that then broke out, put a stop to this enterprize. To the exertions of Sir William Temple and the Duke of Ormonde, other writers have attributed the origin of this trade. The state of warfare and the great change of property which took place after the great rebellion, and which may be said not to have subsided until long after the restoration of Charles the 2d, were incompatible with the progress, or almost existence of manufactures; the population of the country being reduced to 850,000. Sir William Petty mentions, that at the restoration, the weavers of Ireland, with their families, amounted to but 30,000, while, at the same time, there were 18,800 "following the trade of drink!" The Duke of Ormonde, Charles's lieutenant, endeavoured to revive the manufacturing industry of Ireland, and procured several Acts for the encouragement of the linen trade, and also for inviting Protestant strangers to settle in the kingdom. He sent Irishmen to be instructed in the details of the linen manufacture in Flanders, and engaged Sir William Temple to send over 500 Brabant families expert in the business; he also procured operatives from Rochelle and the Isle of Rhé; Sir William Cartaret supplied him with a considerable number of workmen from Jersey and the adjacent ports of France. He established a factory and built tenements for the workmen, at Chapelizod, near Dublin, where he had 300 hands at work, and erected another factory at his own town of Carrick-on-Suir, assigning to the workmen 500 acres of land near the town, for three lives and 31 years, at a peppercorn for the lives, and afterwards at two-thirds of the value. Colonel Laurence, who was confidentially employed by Lord Ormonde, declared that on this account "posterity would own their future affluence to be a blessing they derived from his Grace's great wisdom." The Duke of Ormonde's example was followed by many other landowners, and Lord Dungannon, in Ulster, gathered the scattered elements of the linen manufacture, and gave encouragement, attended with great success, to the Scotch settlers, who brought, in a surprisingly short time, the manufacture of coarse linen to great perfection; insomuch, that Laurence, in his work entitled The Interest of Ireland, published in 1682, says, "My opinion is, that there is not a greater quantity of linen produced in the like circuit in Europe; and although the generality of their cloth 14 years since was flimsy and thin, yet of late it is much improved, to a good firmness and strength."

In William the Third's reign the linen trade rose to importance, from the compact entered into between the English and Irish merchants to discourage the woollen trade and promote the linen trade of Ireland; the jealousy of the English manufactures being aroused by the considerable exportation of woollen manufacture from Ireland. To the addresses of the English Parliament on this subject, the King returned the following answer, on the 2d of July 1698: "I shall do all that in me lies to discourage the woollen manufacture in Ireland, and to encourage the linen manufacture there, and to promote the trade of England." On this the Irish Parliament made the following comment, when it was read as part of the speech from the throne by the Lords Justices:

"We pray leave to assure your Excellencies that we shall endeavour to establish a linen and hempen manufacture here, and render the same useful to England, as well as advantageous to this kingdom; and we hope to find such a temperament in respect to the woollen trade here, that the same may not be injurious to England."

The consequence of this was a law, passed the 25th of March 1629, levying 4 *s.* additional duty on every 20 *s.* value of broad cloth exported out of Ireland, and 2 *s.* on every 20 *s.* value of serges, baize, kerseys, stuffs, or any other work of new drapery made of wool, or mixed with wool, friezes only excepted. Arthur Young states, "The addresses of the two Houses to the King carry the clearest evidence of their source, the jealousy of merchants and manufacturers; I might add, their ignorance too. They were dictated upon the narrow idea that the prosperity of the woollen fabrics of Ireland was inconsistent with the welfare of those of England. It would at present be fortunate for both kingdoms if these

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errors had been confined to the last century." Sir William Temple and other writers in the English interest endeavour to show that in this agreement there was a fair reciprocity, and that it was as becoming the Irish to forego any interference with woollens, as it was the English not to venture on linens. It would appear that the Irish had reason to complain that this arrangement was not honourably kept by England. We find loud complaints made in the beginning of the reign of George 3d, that by the 23d of George the 2d, England imposing a duty on Irish sail-cloth, and not permitting checked, striped, printed, painted, stained, or dyed linens to be imported into England, and, by giving bounty to the linen manufacture in England, without fully extending the same to Ireland, had violated the protection she had promised to Ireland of her flax and hempen manufactures. It is also to be remembered that the compact as to linens and woollens, even if observed, was unfair towards Ireland; for the linen manufacture was not more than in its infancy, while the woollen was fully established, and the principal manufacture of the country. Owing to the eagerness of the Irish manufacturers to profit by the advantage of foreign trade, Wallace, in his essays, states, "Many of the Irish goods exported were of such defective quality, owing to the infant state of the manufacture, that the character, and consequently the interests, of the Irish manufactures and commerce were very much injured by their premature appearance in foreign markets."

The immigration of French manufacturers, after the revocation of the edict of Nantes, into Ireland, to which I have already alluded, gave considerable impetus to the linen trade. The principal of these, a Mr. Lewis Cromelin, obtained a patent for carrying on and improving the linen manufacture, together with a grant of 800*l.* per annum, as interest of 10,000*l.* to be advanced by him as capital for conducting the same; 200*l.* per annum for his trouble; 120*l.* per annum for three assistants; and 60*l.* per annum for the support of a French minister, in the town of Lisburn, where many of the emigrants settled. In 1705 this gentleman wrote a work on the linen trade, which, at the time, was supposed to have considerable influence in extending the manufacture. Previous to Mr. Cromelin's time, no web finer than a 14^{00} had been made in Ireland; but he imported 1,000 looms from Holland, and spinning-wheels on an improved construction.* His efforts were crowned with considerable success. Until the 4th of Queen Anne, linen was not permitted to be exported duty-free, and in the 9th of her reign a board of trustees of the linen and hempen manufactures was established. In the 8th of George 1st, 1,500*l.* was granted to build a linen hall, and in the 10th of the same reign, 2,000*l.* was also granted for the encouragement of the growth of flax and hemp. It would occupy too much space, and not tend to any useful purpose, to enumerate all the numerous laws passed with the intent to promote the linen trade in Ireland. Previous to 1778, bleached linen was sold in the fairs; the same person who manufactured it bleached it. When the manufacture extended, bleaching became a separate business.

The following table will show the progress of the linen manufacture from the year 1700 to the year 1777.

AN ACCOUNT of the EXPORT of LINEN CLOTH and LINEN YARN, from *Ireland*.

In the YEAR.	Linen Cloth.	Yarn.	Value of Cloth at 1 *s.* 3 *d.* per Yard.	Value of Yarn at £. 6. per 120 lbs.	Total Value.
	Yards.	*Cwts.*	£.	£.	£.
1700 - -	- - -	- - -	14,112	—	—
1710 - -	1,688,574	7,975	105,537	47,853	153,389
1711 - -	1,254,815	7,321	78,425	43,928	122,354
1712 - -	1,376,122	7,916	86,007	47,496	133,504
1713 - -	1,819,816	11,802	113,738	70,815	184,554
1714 - -	2,188,272	15,078	155,002	158,326	313,329
1715 - -	2,153,120	13,931	107,650	146,283	253,939
1716 - -	2,188,105	10,747	109,405	112,847	222,252
1717 - -	2,437,265	18,052	132,018	189,555	321,574

* Dubourdieu's Survey of Antrim.

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In the YEAR.	Linen Cloth.	Yarn.	Value of Cloth at 1 s. 3 d. per Yard.	Value of Yarn at £. 6. per 120 lbs.	Total Value.
	Yards.	*Cwts.*	£.	£.	£.
1718 - -	2,247,375	14,050	121,732	147,527	269,260
1719 - -	2,359,352	15,070	127,798	158,239	286,038
1720 - -	2,437,984	15,722	121,899	94,334	216,233
1721 - -	2,520,701	14,696	126,035	88,178	214,213
1722 - -	3,419,994	14,754	170,995	88,524	259,519
1723 - -	4,378,545	15,672	218,927	94,637	312,964
1724 - -	3,879,170	14,594	193,958	87,564	281,522
1725 - -	3,864,987	13,701	193,249	82,207	275,457
1726 - -	4,368,395	17,507	218,419	105,042	323,462
1727 - -	4,768,889	17,287	238,444	103,720	342,171
1728 - -	4,692,764	11,450	234,638	62,975	297,613
1729 - -	3,927,918	11,855	196,395	65,206	261,602
1730 - -	4,136,203	10,088	206,810	55,485	262,295
1731 - -	3,775,830	13,746	220,256	84,194	304,451
1732 - -	3,792,551	15,343	237,034	92,061	309,096
1733 - -	4,777,076	13,357	298,567	82,372	380,939
1734 - -	5,451,758	18,122	340,734	108,733	449,468
1735 - -	6,761,151	15,900	422,571	94,405	517,977
1736 - -	6,508,151	14,743	406,759	88,463	495,222
1737 - -	6,138,785	14,695	409,252	18,173	497,325
1738 - -	5,175,744	15,945	345,049	95,674	440,724
1739 - -	5,962,316	18,200	397,487	129,202	506,690
1740 - -	6,627,771	18,542	441,851	111,256	553,108
1741 - -	7,207,741	21,656	480,516	129,941	610,457
1742 - -	7,074,168	16,330	471,611	97,984	569,595
1743 - -	6,058,041	14,169	403,869	85,016	488,885
1744 - -	6,124,892	18,011	459,366	108,066	567,432
1745 - -	7,171,963	22,066	537,897	132,398	670,295
1746 - -	6,820,786	27,741	511,588	166,451	678,010
1747 - -	9,633,884	28,910	722,541	173,464	896,005
1748 - -	8,692,671	19,418	543,291	116,508	659,800
1749 - -	9,504,338	21,694	594,021	130,164	724,185
1750 - -	11,200,460	22,373	653,360	134,238	787,598
1751 - -	12,891,318	23,743	751,993	142,459	894,452
1752 - -	10,656,003	23,407	621,600	140,442	762,042
1753 - -	10,411,787	23,238	694,119	139,428	839,018
1754 - -	12,090,903	22,594	806,060	135,567	941,732
1755 - -	13,379,733	27,948	891,982	167,692	1,059,675
1756 - -	11,944,328	26,997	796,288	161,982	1,046,841
Average - -	11,796,361	24,328	745,057	145,972	904,479
1757 - -	15,508,709	31,078	1,033,913	186,473	1,220,387
1758 - -	14,982,557	31,995	998,837	191,970	1,190,807
1759 - -	14,093,431	27,571	939,562	165,426	1,104,988
1760 - -	13,375,456	31,042	891,697	186,254	1,077,951
1761 - -	12,048,881	39,699	803,251	238,198	1,041,457
1762 - -	15,559,676	35,950	1,037,311	215,702	1,253,014
1763 - -	16,013,105	34,468	1,067,540	206,808	1,274,348
Average - -	14,511,973	33,114	967,445	198,690	1,166,136
1764 - -	15,201,081	31,715	1,006,738	190,292	1,197,031
1765 - -	14,355,205	26,127	957,013	156,762	1,233,402
1766 - -	17,892,102	35,018	1,192,806	210,109	1,552,017
1767 - -	20,148,170	30,274	1,343,211	181,648	1,692,761
1768 - -	18,490,019	32,590	1,232,667	195,542	1,382,294
1769 - -	17,790,705	37,037	1,186,047	222,223	1,556,525
1770 - -	20,560,754	33,417	1,370,716	200,502	1,742,559
Average - -	17,776,862	32,311	1,184,171	193,868	1,379,512
1771 - -	25,376,808	34,166	1,691,787	204,996	2,108,257
1772 - -	20,599,178	32,441	1,544,938	194,650	1,739,588
1773 - -	18,450,700	28,078	1,383,802	168,473	1,552,276
1774 - -	16,916,674	29,194	1,127,777	174,864	1,302,641
1775 - -	20,205,087	30,598	1,346,985	183,588	1,530,573
1776 - -	20,502,587	36,152	1,306,838	216,912	1,583,750
1777 - -	19,714,638	29,698	1,314,308	178,188	1,492,496
Average - -	20,252,239	31,475	1,390,919	188,810	1,615,654

Average of 30 years since 1748 - - - - - - -	1,228,148
Average of 30 years before - - - - - - - -	417,600

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Mr. Henry Archdall, in the year 1771, computed that Ireland manufactured linen for exportation to the value of 1,541,200*l.*; and for home consumption, 658,906*l.*; Journals of the Commons, Vol. 16th. There were no means of calculating the home consumption; and the value of the exports of linen yarn in 1771 (unless he meant only to give the value of linen cloth exported) was 2,108,257*l.* On the preceding table of the exports of linen and linen yarn from 1700, Mr. Arthur Young thus remarks: "It appears that the manufacture of linen has gone on in a regular increase, until it has arrived in the last seven years to be an object of prodigious consequence. The averages of each period of seven years are of particular importance, as there is one political lesson to be deduced from them which may be of great use hereafter; they prove in the clearest manner that no judgment is ever to be formed of the state of the manufacture from one or two years, but on the contrary, from seven years alone."

I give a table of the quantities of Irish linens imported into England from Christmas 1756 to Christmas 1773:

QUANTITIES of IRISH LINENS imported into *England* from Christmas 1756 to Christmas 1773.

	Yards.		*Yards.*
In the year - 1757	11,925,290		
— - 1758	14,383,248		
— - 1759	12,793,412		
— - 1760	13,311,674		
— - 1761	13,354,448		
	65,768,072	or per annum - -	13,153,614
In the year - 1762	13,476,366		
— - 1763	13,110,858		
— - 1764	13,187,109		
— - 1765	14,757,353		
— - 1766	17,941,229		
	72,472,415	or per annum - -	14,494,583
In the year - 1767	16,500,755		
— - 1768	15,249,248		
— - 1769	16,496,271		
— - 1770	18,195,087		
— - 1771	20,622,217		
	87,063,578	or per annum - -	17,612,715
In the year 1772 - - - - - - -			19,171,771
— 1773 - - - - - - -			17,896,994

The importance of the linen trade had early attracted the attention of Parliament, and considerable sums were from time to time voted for its support. The total sums applied for its maintenance in the year 1777 were,

	£.
Produce of the duties appropriated to the purpose -	14,446
Parliamentary bounty - - - - - -	4,000
Bounty on the import of flax-seed - - -	15,094
£.	33,540

And the total sums applied from the year 1700 to the year 1777 were,

	£.
Paid by the Vice-treasurer - - - - -	847,504
Parliamentary bounty - - - - -	192,540
Bounty on flax import - - - - -	226,834
Ditto on exports of canvass - - - -	28,682
Total - - - £.	1,295,560

Mr.

Mr. Arthur Young wisely remarks in respect to these grants: "It is contrary to all principles of commerce to suppose that such an increasing manufacture as the linen has been, would want flax or flax-seed without bounties on the import, or that manufacturers in it would not earn their bread without a present of 55,000 *l.* per annum."

The daily earnings of weavers and spinners in 1779, are stated by Mr. Young to be as follows:

The following are the earnings of the manufacturers in linen fabrics:

PLACES.	Weavers: Fine Linen.	Weavers: Coarse Linen.	Women: Spinners.
	s. *d.*	*s.* *d.*	*d.*
Market Hill	1 6	1 2	3
Ardmagh	- -	1 2	
Mahon	- -	1 -	3 ½
Lurgan	1 4	1 -	3
Warren's Town	1 6	1 1	3
Innishoen	- -	- -	4
Mount-charles	- -	- -	2 ½
Castle Caldwell	- -	- -	2 ½
Inniskilling	- -	- -	4
Belleisle	- -	1 3	4
Florence Court	- -	- 10	3
Farnham	- -	- -	4
Strokestown	- -	- -	3 ½
Ballymoat	- -	- -	3 ½
Mercra	- -	- -	2 ½
Sortland	- -	- -	3
Westport	- -	2 -	3
Annsgrove	- -	- -	2
Average	1 5	1 - ½	3 ¼

On this table he makes the following remarks:—"These earnings are from double to near treble those of husbandry labour throughout the kingdom, and yet complaints of poverty are infinitely more common among these people than in those parts of the kingdom that have no share of the manufacture. It is so in all countries, and ought to prevent too assiduous an attention to such complaints. Those who for the sake of great earnings will become weavers, must do it under the knowledge that they embrace, or continue in a life, not of the same regular tenor with the lowest species of labourers. If they will not be more prudent and saving, they ought not to clamour and expect the public to turn things topsy-turvy to feed them, who, with any degree of attention might have supported themselves much better than another class that never complain at all."

The number of yards of linen exported from 1777 to 1800 are as follows:

YEAR.	Yards of Linen Exported.	Value per Yard.	Total Value.
		s. *d.*	£.
1777	19,714,638		
1778	21,945,729		
1779	I have no return for these two years.		
1780			
1781 (March 25)	14,947,265		
1782	24,970,303		
1783	16,039,705		
1784	24,961,893		
1785	26,677,647		

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YEAR.	Yards of Linen Exported.	Value per Yard.	Total Value.
		s. *d.*	£.
1786 - - -	28,168,666		
1787 - - -	30,728,728		
1788 - - -	35,487,691		
1789 - - -	29,344,633		
1790 - - -	37,322,125		
1791 - - -	39,718,706		
1792 - - -	45,581,667		
1793 - - -	43,312,657		
1794 - - -	43,259,764		
1795 - - -	42,780,340		
1796 - - -	46,705,319	1 7	3,697,503
1797 - - -	36,559,746	1 5½	2,665,814
1798 - - -	33,497,171	1 5½	2,442,489
1799 - - -	38,466,289	1 5½	2,804,833
1800 - - -	35,676,908	1 7	2,824,421

It appears that the linen trade during the 18th century continued to advance, until the check it received during the American war. On the establishment of peace it however revived, and was at its greatest height from 1792 to 1796. From the year 1800 to 1825 the following return, taken from the Parliamentary Report on Ireland, made on the 16th of July 1830, shows the number of yards of linen exported from Ireland:—

In 1801, to Great Britain, 34,622,898; to foreign parts, 3,288,704: total number of yards exported, 37,911,602.

In 1805, number of yards exported to Great Britain, 40,707,267; to foreign parts, 2,976,266: total 43,683,533.

In 1809, number of yards exported to Great Britain, 33,018,884; to foreign parts, 4,147,515: total 37,166,399.

In 1813, number of yards exported to Great Britain, 35,018,884; to foreign parts, 3,926,731: total number of yards exported, 38,945,615.

In 1817, number of yards exported to Great Britain, 50,290,321; to foreign parts, 5,940,254: total number of yards exported, 56,230,575.

In 1821, number of yards exported to Great Britain, 45,519,509; to foreign parts, 4,011,630: total number of yards exported, 49,531,139.

In 1825, number of yards exported to Great Britain, 52,560,926; to foreign parts, 2,553,589: total number of yards exported, 55,114,515.

No account has been rendered for the period subsequent to 1825, the commercial intercourse between the two countries having from the termination of that year been assimilated by law to a coasting traffic. The Commissioners will perceive that the exports of Ireland have been on the increase since 1800, and that in 1817 the exports reached the highest; in this year a considerable importation of foreign corn took place, owing to the deficient harvest which occurred in that year, and the foreign corn merchants took our linen in exchange for grain. This circumstance, together with the cessation of the war, accounts for the increase in the foreign exports. A slight decrease occurred in the exports in 1809 and 1813, but for this we can account by the unsettled state of commerce, owing to the continuance of the war, and the loss, in a great degree, of the continental market. It is also to be remarked that not only the quantity but the quality of the exports increased; Ireland lost in a great measure her coarse linen trade, owing to the prohibition placed on the export of yarn in 1784, which forced the English manufacturers to turn their attention to providing yarn at home, which they did so successfully as not only to be able to be independent of a supply from Ireland, but also to drive the Irish out of the market in those coarse fabrics, to which their mill-spun yarn was capable of being applied. The exports of linen since 1800 were chiefly if not altogether confined to the finer descriptions of linens, from 14 to 24-hundreds, and therefore indicate a greater increase in the prosperity of the linen trade than would at first appear.

The

The following table contains the total value of the unbleached cloth sold by weavers in the different brown markets in the four provinces, in the years 1821, 1822, 1823, 1824, as furnished by the returns of the seal-masters, and inspectors of the Linen Board to Parliament in 1825. This return only gives the value of the cloth publicly sold in the market; no return has been or could be made of the sales by private contract:—

TOTAL.	1821.	1822.	1823.	1824.
	£.	£.	£.	£.
Ulster - - -	2,066,119	2,127,528	1,968,177	2,109,305
Leinster - - -	285,352	336,695	207,636	192,855
Munster - -	68,868	82,200	95,194	110,420
Connaught - -	117,662	130,912	140,854	168,087
Ireland - - -	2,538,001	2,677,335	2,411,861	2,580,697

There are no means of ascertaining the quantity of linen used for home consumption; but it has been stated, by the most intelligent of my witnesses, that, even taking into consideration the more general use of cotton as a substitution for linen, that the production and consumption of linens have been on the increase during the present century. It will also be perceived that, as the prohibiting duties decreased, every seven years, the exports increased, and arrived at the highest when they were withdrawn and the trade left free. No returns of the exports, or the number of pieces sold publicly in the brown markets, have been kept since 1825, and I am unable to furnish any table as to the increase; however, all the witnesses I have examined, whose testimony is worth attention, state (as will be seen in this Report), that at no period has the linen trade been in such a condition, whether we regard the extent of the manufacture, the quality of the fabrics, or the mode in which the manufacture is conducted. As to the earnings and condition of the weavers, I have already given a table of their earnings in 1779, as stated by Mr. Young; and, on comparing it with the present earnings, as will appear in this Report, the Commissioners will perceive that, taking into account the reduction in the price of the necessaries of life, the earnings of the weavers are now equal to, if not higher than, the average, as furnished by Mr. Young in 1779.

In 1810, according to Mr. Wakefield, in the county of Antrim, a weaver, on a web of a 16-hundred, could earn, in a week, 6 *s.* 4 *d.*; in the county of Monaghan a good and industrious weaver, on the average, earned 6 *s.* 8 *d.* a week; at Lurgan, county Armagh, men by weaving could earn from 11 *d.* to 13 *d.* a day; at Armagh a good weaver, by finishing his web in a week, could earn 6*s.* 6*d.* a week; the cloth made there was 6-hundreds, 50 to 52 yards long; the looms cost from four to five guineas each; one pound of tallow was required to dress a web; that the sealing of the web cost 2 *d.*, and the carriage the same; children were hired to attend a loom at from 13 *s.* to 17 *s.* the half year, with diet, lodging, and washing; and they brought the weaver eight guineas a year. He calculates the average earnings of the weavers to be 15 *l.* per annum, and states that weavers estimate that, when working for themselves, they gain 10 *s.* a web, and, if they worked every day, could weave a web in the week. The earnings of the weavers depended on their ability to manufacture the finest fabrics. From the accounts he was able to collect, the average earnings of a linen weaver might be estimated at 7 *s.* a week; but it was very difficult to ascertain it exactly, their manufacturing and commercial habits being so much intermixed. A weaver, for instance, bought unspun yarn by the cwt., and his family spun it; or he bought so many hanks of spun yarn, and wove it into cloth. His earnings, in this case, must have depended upon the rate at which he purchased the raw material, and that at which he sold it in a manufactured state; and the latter, for some years past, had been very fluctuating. "It may, perhaps, be thought," he says, "that the notes I have collected on this head furnish very little information. I have ascertained the quantity which a good workman can weave in a week; but, as his earnings depend on the rise or fall of the markets, no decisive result could be obtained, except in the case where a weaver has a capital sufficient to employ looms himself; and in many instances, even in that case, particularly if the looms be in his own house, it would be attended with

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with considerable difficulty. In such calculations the journeyman, who is a yearly servant, at about eight guineas per annum wages, with board and lodging, must be taken into consideration; but board in this country is not very expensive; and nothing can exhibit, in a more striking point of view, the miserable manner in which the working hands live, than an examination of the value of the work done by a manufacturing labourer in Armagh, where linens are made of 7-8th width, and of a fineness known by the name of an 8-hundred. Six British shillings are paid for weaving a web 52 yards long; and a man must sit very closely at work to complete this quantity in a week."

In proof of these statements, he gives the following table:—

	£.	s.	d.
52 weeks, therefore, at 6 *s.* 6 *d.* is - - -	14	6	–
From which deduct a year's wages - - -	10	2	1
And there remains, as his maintenance for a year - £.	4	13	11

Mr. Dubourdieu, in his Survey of Antrim in 1812, states, "Where the workman weaves on his own account, his profits depend not only on his own exertions, but on his skill or good fortune in purchasing his materials. If the yarn is laid in cheap, the profit of that is added to the work; if dear, it is often a diminution of it. So it is in every branch of the linen trade, where the weaver is the proprietor of his yarn, which is either bought or spun in his own family. When the yarn belongs to another, he is then paid a fixed price for weaving the web; his earnings are then certain, and depend entirely on himself, as there are stated wages for every degree of fineness, by the yard or piece. Without entering into the particulars of each web of a different degree of fineness, the weekly earnings of a good linen weaver who works for an employer may average about 7 *s.*, and sometimes 8 *s.* a week. Inferior workmen do not make within one-third of that sum. Many weavers have small farms, and only employ themselves in this way during the intervals of their farming occupations. Many of them are sons of farmers, who assist in the work of the land, and then return to the loom; and most of those who follow this trade, and live in the country, have gardens and ground allowed them for setting potatoes, so that few are without some addition to their ostensible calling." The Commissioners will perceive, on comparing the authorities I have cited, and the evidence I shall quote as to the past and present pecuniary condition of the linen weavers, that at no period was their pecuniary condition better or so good as it is at the present. For this important circumstance is to be borne in mind, that, while skilful and industrious men were able to earn from 6 *s.* to 8 *s.* a week, from 1779 to 1812, that now industrious children, from 14 to 18 years of age, both male and female, are able to earn the same sum; and that though the average earnings of a weaver are not higher than at the periods to which I have alluded, yet, that the average amount of the earnings of a weaver's family is vastly increased by the facilities now afforded for the application of youthful and female labour to the most successful operations of the loom. It is true, that the females and children of weavers have lost the spinning of yarn; but the highest rate of earnings per week made at spinning by grown females did not amount to more than from 2 *s.* to 2 *s.* 8 *d.*; and of children, from 14 *s.* to 17 *s.*, to from 1 *s.* to 1 *s.* 3 *d.*

Having thus endeavoured to show the rise, progress, and past state of the linen trade of Ireland, I shall proceed to lay before the Commissioners its present state, the condition of the weavers employed in its manufacture, and the causes of that condition.

The weavers employed on the manufacture of flax into cloth, or flax and cotton, called union, whom I shall class under the head of linen weavers, may be divided into those employed on,

1. Sailcloth, canvas, and sacking.

2. Coarse linen for shirtings and other uses, of from 5 to 10-hundred. The hundred alludes to the number of splits in the reed through which the threads of the warp passes, and the fineness of the web is reckoned according to the hundred or number of splits in the reed.

3. Fine linen from 11 to 24-hundred; lawns from 11 to 26-hundred; damask, single and double; diapers and linen drills.

These

These are the principal denominations of the fabrics classed under the head of linen; any other minor divisions will be noticed in considering the locality in which they are woven.

I shall now proceed to state the result of my inquiries as to the condition of the linen trade in the different localities which I visited.

Dublin.

The trade in Dublin is restricted within very narrow limits, and confined to one or two manufacturers, of whom the Messrs. Crostwhaite are the principal, and I might say, the only, with the exception of one or two coarse canvas and sail-cloth manufacturers.

Leland Crostwhaite, esq., of Chapelizod, near Dublin, in partnership with Thomas Crostwhaite, esq., general merchants, concerned in the spinning of flax by machinery, and manufacturers of linen cloths, states, " he has been engaged in the spinning of linen yarn and the manufacture of linen cloth 20 years; employs 138 looms now; had 250 employed in 1827, and only 80 in 1835, owing to the high price of flax and the low price of linen in that year; employs no power-looms at present; did many years ago on sacking; the price of weaving this description of cloth at that time by hand-loom being so high as not to remunerate him." He says, " under the circumstances in which we were then placed, we found it necessary to resort to power-looms; but we relinquished them when we could obtain hand-loom weavers at a rate which we could afford to pay; we have many more applicants for work than we can employ, and our present weavers are constantly applying for employment for their sons; we generally give out work in the immediate neighbourhood of our factory; but we still continue to employ those men who formerly worked at another factory which we had at Lucan, a few miles from our present one at Chapelizod. Our object is to keep the number of weavers we have, constantly employed, and, unless in cases of interruption by floods or other casualties, our weavers have constant work at their command; but we leave them at liberty to avail themselves of any other occasional and more remunerative labour that may present itself, such as tilling their own land; and in cases of a want of demand in the market for the quantity of goods capable of being produced by the number of weavers we at any time employ, and after letting them accumulate a reasonable time, we should prefer parting with a number of our weavers, and giving them an opportunity to turn to other employments, rather than lessen the quantity of work given out to each. For the last three years, I consider the earnings of my weavers may be computed at from 8*s.* 3*d.* to 12*s.* per week, to earn which sum requires about 12 hours' work per day."

James Green, putter-out and taker-in of linen cloth to Mr. Crostwhaite, states: " I am acquainted and connected with the trade since I was employed by Mr. Crostwhaite about 22 years ago. Mr. Crostwhaite employs 139 looms now; we had 260 looms employed; it was the greatest number we ever had; we had afterwards to part with 140 men; it reduced our number of looms to 120. In 1829 they were further reduced to 90 looms. From that to 1835 they remained nearly stationary. Last year additional looms have been put on * * * * *. We attribute the falling off in 1828 to the effects of the general panic in 1826; against which, though Mr. Crostwhaite was able to stand at the first when every one else was failing, still the quantity of goods he made at that time, for which he could get no sale, obliged him, when the trade began to revive in 1828, to strike off so large a number of hands. It was, however, much better for the weavers to be broke in 1828, when the trade began to revive, than in 1826, when it was at a stand. We use no power-looms now in our factory. In the year 1817, when Mr. Crostwhaite began to weave linen cloth, he had one power-loom for weaving sacking; he increased the number in the year 1818 to seven; at the close of the same year he dropt them and never took them up again; he found them not to answer in the making of sacking; he also saw that he could get the same work done cheaper by hand * * * *. We give the numbers of weavers we employ, speaking generally, constant employment; except in the case of floods or some such unforeseen and unavoidable accidents, I do not think the men have been from any cause idle on the average for the last three years more than one month in each

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year * * * *. Some men earn as much now as they could 10 years ago, though I consider wages as low now as ever I remember them. I do not consider that the wages of the weavers have been progressively falling since any particular period. I look on the hand-loom weavers as the worst off and most distressed of all classes of trades * * * * * *. Our weavers come and go; that is, go into and out of other employment. Seventeen of our weavers have a house and an acre of land each; and some of our men take advantage of the hay and corn harvest work, &c. &c. &c. * * *. On the worst paying work we have, a man could earn 8*s.* 3*d.* per week on the average for the last year; in the year before he could earn 9*s.*; this is on coarse tow duck; the narrow work (No. 18) a boy of 17 can do as well as an adult; and any ordinary person up to 40 years of age could easily learn, so as to weave three pieces of the (No. 18) narrow duck in a week; for it we pay 2*s.* 9*d.* a piece. On No. 62, 37 beers, 3-inch width, linen, a weaver is paid 5*s.* a piece for the weaving; a man can weave five pieces in a fortnight by working 12 hours a day, making 12*s.* 6*d.* a week. No. 50, 34 beers, 27 inch, is paid 4*s.* 8*d.* a piece for the weaving; a man can make five pieces of it in a fortnight, by 12 hours work each day. On No. 30, 31 beers, 27 inches wide, duck, 4*s.* 2*d.* is paid for the weaving; a man can weave five pieces of it in the fortnight, by 12 hours work each day. No. 24, 27 ½ beers, 27-inch width, duck, a weaver is paid 3*s.* 2*d.* a piece for the weaving; can weave three pieces in the week. No. 20, 26 beers, 27-inch width duck, a weaver is paid 3*s.* a piece for the weaving; can weave three pieces in the week. No. 18, 24 beers, 26 ½ inches width, duck, a weaver is paid 2*s.* 9*d.* a piece for the weaving; can weave three pieces in the week. No. 185, 51 beers, 45 inches width (sheetings), a weaver is paid 7*s.* for weaving the piece; he can weave two pieces in the week. On No. 180, 47 ½ beers, 40-inch width (sheetings), a weaver is paid 6*s.* 6*d.* the piece for weaving; he can weave two pieces in the week (12 hours work). On No. 172, 41 beers, 36-inch wide (sheetings), a weaver is paid 6*s.* a piece for the weaving; can weave two pieces in the week, 12 hours a day work." The deductions for attendance, winding, dressing, and light would amount to about 1*s.* 8*d.* a week, which is to be deducted from this table of earnings.

Terence Murray, sail-cloth manufactory, Glasnevin, near Dublin, states: "I have been engaged in this description of manufacture, as an employer, 10 years. I served my time to the linen business in the county Meath, near Drogheda * * *. At all periods of my recollection the wages of the weavers were low as compared with other trades. The wages in the linen trade I do not consider much lower now than they were 20 years ago * * * *. I employ 13 looms now; but I have 14 looms, and would keep the 14th going if I could get a good weaver. There are not many weavers of sail cloth, of the description I weave, out of employment here; those that had been employed at it have either gone into other employments, or out of the country. My weavers work in a factory, and on looms provided with every necessary, without charge, except for light in the winter time; they live in cottages near the factory, under me, for which I charge 1*s.* 8*d.* a week. I give 5*s.* a week for dressed cloth, and 5*s.* 4*d.* for undressed. Some of the men are able to make two pieces in the week; others only one and a half. I give my weavers constant work; they are never kept waiting for work, except in very damp weather, when the chains would not be dry enough to put on the looms. For the last three years my weavers have been able to earn, on the average, 8*s.* a week.

Patrick Reilly, Thomas Boland, Roger Fox, and John Ledgwicke, linen-weavers, employed by Mr. Crostwhaite, states:—

Reilly: "I am acquainted with the trade 25 years." Thomas Bolland says, "It is 10 years since I first went to it." Fox says, "I am acquainted with it 12 years. Reilly and Ledgwicke never left their trade for other employments. Bolland was four years clerk to a linen manufacturer in Drogheda. Fox was a drayman for seven years, but returned to his trade because he found weaving better than carting, though he earned 10*s.* a week as a drayman."

Patrick Reilly says, "I have two looms, worked by myself and son, aged 13 years. After deducting light and winding, I can earn on my own loom, on an average for the last three years, 8*s.* 9*d.* a week; it takes me to earn this from 15 to 16 hours' work out of the 24. My boy, who is only at weaving half a year, earns 3*s.* a week. My family consists of a wife and five children, one aged 15, a girl, a boy aged 13, a girl aged 9, and a girl aged 2. My girl of 15 has 3*s.* 3*d.* a week for winding in the factory; she works 12 hours a day.

Two

Two years ago she went to school, where she had been for the seven years before, and she is able to read and write. My income to support my family is 16 *s.* a week. My wife earns 1 *s.* a week by winding; I pay 1 *s.* 6 *d.* a week rent, and my fuel costs me 2 *s.* a week."

John Ledgwicke says, "I have three looms; one worked by myself, another by a journeyman, another by an apprentice. For the last three years, deducting light and winding, I have earned on my own loom 8 *s.* a week, working, on an average 16 hours each day. The journeyman pays 2 *s.* a week for the use of the loom, and we find him cooking and lodging. My apprentice earns 2 *s.* 9 *d.* a week for me; he was bound to me for seven years, and I got 5 *l.* with him as a fee. My family consists of six children, my wife, and the apprentice. The ages of my children are, a girl 17, ditto 15, ditto 12, a boy 9, a girl 3, and an infant boy 9 months. My eldest girl earns 3 *s.* 6 *d.* a week at the factory spinning; she is at that work these three years; she was at school before she went to the factory. My second eldest girl earns at the factory 2 *s.* 9 *d.* a week; my wife earns 1 *s.* a week winding, which make 1 *l.* a week in all. I pay 1 *l.* 10 *s.* a week rent, 2 *s.* for fuel, and 6 *d.* a week for light."

Thomas Bolland states, "I earn, on an average, on my single loom, 7 *s.* 2 *d.* a week, after deducting light and winding. To earn this it takes me to work each day 12 hours; I do not, however, work more than five days in each week. I am a single man; I pay 1 *s.* 4 *d.* a week for rent."

Roger Fox states, "On the average of the last two years I earned on my loom, after deducting for light, &c. &c. 10 *s.* a week; I have had another loom for a few months, for which I get 2 *s.* a week from a journeyman. I have four young children, the eldest only eight years old. My wife earns 1 *s.* a week by winding, which leaves me 13 *s.* a week for our living. I pay 1 *s.* a week rent, and 1 *s.* 6 *d.* a week for fuel. For the last three years we have been kept waiting for work for about a month in each year; but this we have taken into account in giving the rate of wages."

Patrick Foster and Martin M'Garry, of Glasnevin, sail-cloth weavers, state, "We came to Glasnevin about two years ago; we previously wove coarse linen for farmers' use, in the county Westmeath and Carlow. By coming to Glasnevin to weave sail cloth for Mr. Murray, we have not bettered our condition, as regards the amount of our earnings; but we have, in respect of being able to get the amount of our wages more punctually and regularly. The farmers and country people often kept us a long time out of our money; whereas we get whatever we can earn here paid weekly. We were only able to earn one week with the other, for the three years before we came to Glasnevin, and while we were working job work in the country, 8 *s.* a week, out of which it costs us 1 *s.* a week for winding. Since we came to Glasnevin to work in the hand-loom coarse canvass factory, we are able to earn, taking the average of one week with the other, during work and waiting for work, somewhat more than 7 *s.* 6 *d.* a week, out of which we have to deduct 4 ½ *d.* for the winding of the weft. If we had constant employment we would be able to earn 12 *s.* a week. Our employer does not charge us any rent for the use of the factory-room looms or tackling. We supply candles ourselves; nor are there any fines for irregularity of attendance, or for not making up a certain quantity of work in the week, or by a certain day in the week. We rent a thatched cottage for 1 *s.* 8 *d.* a week, containing two rooms, from our employer, several of which he has built round his factory; let us earn little or much, the 1 *s.* 8 *d.* is stopped." Patrick Foster: "I am a married man, and have a wife and six children. Eldest, a girl of 14; second, a girl of 12; third, a boy of 10; fourth, a girl of 8; fifth, a boy of 6; sixth, a girl of 3. Neither my wife or any of my children weave. My wife is employed in the factory; she can earn, at an average, 3 *s.* a week. My eldest girl winds, and gets, on an average, 3 *s.* a week; my second girl, of 12 years of age, minds the house and children; my boy, of 10, earns, by assisting the dresser, about 1 *s.* a week; I send my three youngest children to a free school; the other three I do not send; I would not be able to afford the loss of their time; would be anxious to do so if I could. All my children go to a Sunday-school; and all but the youngest can read. We work, on the average, 13 hours each day, when we have the work to do; and we never idle a single day or hour in the week. We are kept waiting for work about 15 weeks in the year in our present factory. May, June, and July are the worst months for our trade in year, in consequence of there not being much demand for sail cloth in summer."

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From the evidence quoted, the Commissioners will be enabled to form an estimate of the condition of the linen weavers in the vicinity of Dublin. The Commissioners will perceive that on each loom, after deducting the expenses attendant on the weaving, and allowing for the time they are kept waiting for work, the weavers are able to earn from 8*s.* to 12*s.* 6*d.* a week, on from 12 to 15 hours' work each day, independent of the earnings of members of their family by winding for journeymen and apprentices. It will also be perceived with what ease this description of weaving is learned and wrought, and the early age at which youthful labour can be successfully applied to it.

Although the earnings of the weavers are much lower than those earned by any class of labourers, considered as a trade, yet their earnings are much higher than those of the agriculturist, and other labourers in their vicinity, whose average yearly wages do not amount to more than from 6*s.* to 8*s.* a week.

From Mr. Crostwhaite and his foreman's evidence, it appears, that although in the year 1818 he resorted to power-looms, and had seven at work, he only kept them at work for a few months, finding that he could get the cloth woven cheaper by hand-labour. Mr. Crostwhaite states, that the reason he introduced power-looms was, that hand-loom labour was so high at the period as not to allow of its being paid, and that under the circumstances in which he was then placed, he found it necessary to resort to power-looms. He does not state why hand-loom labour should have been so high, as to oblige him then to resort to power-looms, or why it should now be so low as to enable him to get cloth woven cheaper by hand. The fact is, that at the time Mr. Crostwhaite introduced the power-looms there was a fixed rate of wages insisted on by the men, which a depression in the market at the time would not allow him to pay, and he introduced power-looms for the short time, to show the men he could act independently of them. This had the desired effect; the men, sooner than be thrown altogether out of employment, lowered their wages to a rate which enabled him to dispense with the power-looms, and get his cloth made up cheaper by hand. Had Mr. Crostwhaite not introduced the power-looms, and did he not keep them *still in terrorem* over his workmen, he might have been forced to quit the trade, and his weavers would have been thrown out of employment, and lost the means of livelihood offered by one of the most extensive and benevolent manufacturers in Ireland. Mr. Crostwhaite, in speaking of the causes of the condition of the coarse linen trade, states, "I am unacquainted with the precise circumstances which have led to the introduction of power-looms into Scotland, but attribute the present general depression in the coarse linen fabrics we manufacture to the introduction of power-looms into Scotland, added to the want of foreign demand." Mr. Green, Mr. Crostwhaite's foreman, attributes the cause of the low rate of earnings of the hand-loom weavers on the coarse linen fabrics, to the diminished demand for their labour, and the redundant number of weavers anxious for employment. He attributes the undue increase of their numbers, compared with the work there is for them to do, to the circumstances of the weavers bringing up their children to weaving, and to the ease with which it is learned. The weavers, he states, are obliged from poverty to make their children help them, and to put them to weaving, because they are too poor to put them to anything else.

The weavers principally attribute the depression in their trade since 1820, to the introduction of power-looms, to calico, and its substitution for linen. The remedies they propose were to tax power-looms, and repeal the corn laws.

The weavers, whose condition I have been considering, are represented by their employers as a moral, industrious and intellectual body of men. The education which they give their children is very limited, as will appear from the evidence; but for this we can account by their limited means, which do not permit of their affording to do without the assistance of the labour of their children even at the very early age of 10 years, previous to which period little education for useful purposes can be acquired.

Drogheda.

I would now direct the attention of the Commissioners to the condition of the linen trade in Drogheda. The total number of linen weavers in occasional or permanent employment in Drogheda and its vicinity are about 1,890. Of these operatives, 150 are canvas weavers, earning from 6*s.* to 8*s.* per week; 170 ticken weavers, earning from 6*s.* to 10*s.* a week; 80 dowlas weavers, earning from 4*s.* to 6*s.* a week; 40 weavers of coarse sheeting, earning from 5*s.* to 7*s.* a week; 150 sacking weavers, earning from 4*s.* to 6*s.* a week; 1,200 white cloth, from 27 to 30 inch wide, weavers, earning from 4*s.* to 6*s.* a week; 30 white cloth of 36 inch width weavers, earning from 5*s.* to 7*s.* a week. The following have been the gross sums represented as paid by the manufacturers to the weavers; 7*s.* a piece, 92 yards long, is the price paid for the weaving of 27 inch wide market linen, and 9*s.* per 30 inch wide ditto. A weaver can weave two pieces of the 27 inch width in three weeks, or by very hard work three pieces of the 30 inch. The deductions to be made for the expences which the weaver is at in the work does not amount to twopence in each shilling he is paid for the weaving. The rate of wages and earnings of the weavers I have given, were generally considered accurate, hence it appears that the white cloth 27 and 30 inch wide weavers, who amount to 1,200 out of the total number, are not able to earn more than from 4*s.* to 6*s.* a week; and deducting 2*d.* on each shilling for the expenses attendant on the weaving, winding and dressing, the net receipt of the weaver averages only from 3*s.* 4*d.* to 5*s.* a week; the winding is, in most cases, performed by a member of the weaver's family. This is the lowest rate of wages I have met in the trade, and the weavers of Drogheda are in a most distressed condition. In 1836, there was an advance made of 2*s.* a piece on the 27 and 30 inch wide; but prices again fell to 7*s.* and 9*s.* a piece in 1837, and this was the rate paying at the time of the Inquiry last August. The numbers of individuals depending on each weaver for support, as far as I could learn from personal observation or inquiry, amount on the average to six; and the occasional earnings of the weavers at other employments are very small, though they avail themselves of harvest work, and some of them are bound to pay the rent of their cabins by agricultural labour at whatever time their landlords require it, which is, of course, always at the busy season of the year. The redundant labour population of Drogheda and its vicinity is as great, if not greater, than in almost any other part of Ireland; the wives and children of the weavers endeavour to add to their means by begging, and scour the neighbouring districts as "shoulers," begging among the poor farmers contributions of potatoes or meal, which they either make use of for food, or dispose of for money: but in a neighbourhood like that of Drogheda, which might be compared to one vast mendicancy, the means obtained from this source must be scanty and precarious. I would show, a little in detail, how it is the poor weavers, on this rate of earnings, supply themselves with the lowest species of vegetable food, with which they are contented, and provide a place of shelter, if shelter it can be called, to live and weave in, so as to keep off absolute destitution. A person, ignorant of Irish domestic economy, would decide that a weaver earning but 3*s.* 4*d.* a week, and having a family of six to support, must starve; but this is not the case, though, poor fellow, he and his are badly off; with the manure he collects, and in this respect he and all his family are industrious, he is able to plant as much potatoes as will last him from three to four months, on ground obtained *gratis*, from some neighbouring farmer, who is glad to give the potatoe crop for sake of the corn crop, which the manure will enable him to obtain the next year. Now there is wanting about half an acre more to supply potatoes for the remainder of the year, and this ground is taken in conacre, from some farmer, who has manured on rich grass land to let, which will give a good crop of potatoes; for this he agrees to pay about 4*l.* The poor weaver expects from this half an acre to supply himself with about 40 barrels of potatoes, of 20 stone to the barrel, which, with the produce from the ground he has manured himself, will give him food enough, and seed for the ensuing year. Thus, provision being made for the main food of his family, it devolves on his industry to procure clothing, and to pay the rent of his conacre ground and cabin. The industry of his wife and children, by the fattening of a pig, and in some cases, the sale of eggs and poultry, or by begging through the district, enables the family to procure a little milk or kitchen, as it is called. This is the mode of management of those poor weavers, who live on the outskirts of the town, and in the neighbouring districts. How those weavers who live in the centre of the town, and who

have not the same advantages for disposing of their manure, or obtaining conacre ground, support themselves, I cannot so easily explain, except by supposing that they work on the highest-paying fabrics, or have two or more looms for the support of each family.

The cabins that the weavers live and work in, are fearful specimens of what habit will enable a human being to endure; it is impossible that any good description of work could be woven in such sinks of filth; but the very dirt is their principal means of support. I could easily explain, when I visited them, why fever and the cholera had made such dreadful ravages in Drogheda; there is no attempt made at drainage, and after rain it was almost impossible to enter the dwellings; what with the overflow of the noisome pools at the door, and the droppings in the cabin from the mouldy and broken thatch. I have seen whole webs so befouled with these droppings from the sooty roof, as to defy a guess at the nature of the fabric. That a corporate town, entrusted with public property for the benefit of its inhabitants, should have permitted such a state of things, is to me inexplicable; I am persuaded that no part of Europe, or, I might add, of the world, presents such a spectacle of dwellings for human beings as part of Drogheda.

Every street in Drogheda presents a fall for good drainage, and a few hundred pounds so expended would save thousands from pestilence. At the time of the cholera an attempt was made to drain and repair the hovels that surround the town, but it came too late; the attempt has been given up, and dirt and damp still reign undisturbed, The rents for these hovels are enormous, from 2 *l.* to 3 *l.* per annum.* And yet, with all this mass of wretchedness, Drogheda is a rapidly improving town; its commerce is extending, numbers of large mills of all kinds are in progress, and a wealthy middle class is daily rising up. I was greatly pleased with the improved appearance of Drogheda since I had visited it 8 years before; the only drawback was my visit to the dwellings of the weavers. Mr. Nicholas Whitworth, one of the seal-masters, and a person intimately acquainted with the state of all classes in the town, states, "The cabins of the weavers are in so miserable a state, that they are neither fit to work well in, or to live in, and, to my certain knowledge, bring disease and death; some means should be taken, for the sake of the health of the unfortunate people, to remedy this evil. They are obliged to pay as high rents for these dens, as they ought to get comfortable cabins for. The landlords charge 3 *l.* per annum for any cabin having room for two looms; containing only two small rooms, and some only one."

I found no dissimilarity in the rates of wages paid by the different masters for weaving in Drogheda. Whenever I have investigated statements of this kind, I have always found that either the description of the raw material given in the instances to which I have alluded was easier made up, or that the work of the higher-paying employer was of a better description, and required to be made up with greater care; the evidence on this head, without full consideration and investigation, would be likely to mislead. Though Drogheda, from the poverty of its weavers, would afford greater facilities for a dishonest employer (if in his power) to take advantage, for any long period, of the necessities of his weavers to reduce the amount of his wages below the rate which the state of the market would enable him to pay, and although the circumstance of the great body of the Drogheda weavers being reduced to the minimum of subsistence, might lead to the supposition that this had taken place, yet all my evidence goes to show that no real variation in the rates of wages has occurred, and that the manufacturers pay as high a price for the weaving of their cloth as the market will allow them to do. The fact is, that at a certain low rate, they can obtain a demand for their goods in the market, which merely enables them, at very small remuneration to all parties, to continue in the trade; at this rate they can obtain an extensive demand; but the competition in the trade is so great as not to enable them, under the circumstances in which they are placed, to increase the wages of their weavers. The competition amongst manufacturers prevents the possibility of any one employer paying less to his weavers than the demand in the market would allow of his doing, after deducting his fair profits. There are 60 manufacturers employing hand-loom weavers in Drogheda, and if any one of the 60 were to attempt to reduce his rate of wages below what the demand would enable him to give, the other 59 would be glad to get his weavers, and I presume the weavers would be equally glad to go to them. If the number of the weavers were reduced, the manufacture would be proportionably limited; I think that if there

there were but 1,000 weavers instead of the present number, the wages would not be increased. The employers can only get, and only afford to give, a certain price. If there was an opening for agricultural or other employment which was more profitable to the present operatives, the consequence would be, not that the employers would raise their rate of wages, but that they would quit the trade.

I have now to consider the causes which have operated to render it necessary to reduce the rate of wages in Drogheda to their present low rate, a rate lower than in any portion of the linen trade of Ireland; and the only instance in which the earnings of the weaver are reduced to the level of the common labourers, though it must not be forgotten that, on the average, there are two looms to each family, and that from the ease with which the fabric is woven, the labour of females, and young persons from the age of 12 to 20, is usefully applied to the manufacture. I have already alluded to the successful competition of the English and Scotch manufactures with the Drogheda coarse linen manufacture. From the bounty on the exports of linen being paid according to quantity, not quality, and from the difficulty of obtaining large supplies of uniform quality in Ireland, the Irish manufacturers were able to export only mixed linens, while the English and Scotch devoted their attention to the manufacture of coarse linen, and were, in a short time, enabled to undersell the Drogheda manufacturer in his own market. This competition compelled the Drogheda manufacturers to lower wages, and restricted their profits. The manufacture of fine linens not being thus rivalled, the attention of Drogheda manufacturers was directed to this more profitable investment for their skill and capital, and most of the wealthy manufacturers emigrated to the counties Down, Armagh, Derry, and Antrim. These were amongst the first to introduce the system of giving out work to weavers, and transferring the domestic manufacture, carried on by the weavers, into the hands of a class of middlemen that had previously bought the made-up cloth by the weavers and sold it to the wholesale merchants or exporters when bleached. But the hand-loom weavers did not emigrate with the manufacturers, and were left behind to struggle with a competition against which they could only successfully contend by the application of large capital and skill. Advantage was taken of the quantity of unemployed hand-loom labour thus thrown into the market, by a number of small manufacturers, who were tempted to enter the trade from the small fixed capital with which it could be carried on. The large manufacturers, employing from 100 to 200 weavers each, were obliged to lower their wages to meet the competition and eventually left the trade. The small manufacturers were obliged to lower them still further; not being able to make such extensive sales, they could not take the same rate of profit.

Then came the introduction of spinning flax by machinery in England and Scotland by the manufacturers, and its application to produce coarse linens, which cheapened their production. This system not being introduced into Ireland until a considerable period after its introduction into England and Scotland, the Drogheda manufacturers were not able even to keep their former ground in the market, and were obliged to have recourse to the mill-spun yarn instead of the hand-spun; and this they had to import; in many cases they exported the raw flax to Scotland and had it spun there; so that in the one case they had to pay the freight, commission, and insurance on the import of the yarn from Scotland, and in the other to pay the freight, insurance, and commission on the export of the raw material to Scotland, and the same expenses on its import back again converted into yarn; this gave an advantage of from six to eight per cent. on the raw material to the Scotch and English manufacturer. From the number of small manufacturers in the linen trade of Drogheda, and their inability to purchase or keep on hand a large stock of good yarn, added to the want of concentration of their weavers, and their want of means to procure good looms or tackling, they were unable to produce a uniform quality or a regular supply of cloth. The character of their fabrics became injured in the market; moreover the progress of bleaching was, and is, very imperfectly carried on, which added still farther to deteriorate the character and quality of the Drogheda cloth. In a Report made to the House of Commons, December 1782, it is stated, that a great quantity of Irish linen had been returned from England in consequence of being injured by the quantities of lime used in the bleaching; that 2,141 pieces had been returned to a man named Crothers; and that deficient measure and other frauds of

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Drogheda weavers, had forced the manufacturing of linens, similar to those of Drogheda, in Lancashire and other parts of England. In addition to all these circumstances, the application of mechanical power in England and Scotland to weaving the description of cloth made in Drogheda, still further tended to enlarge the competition; and the manufacturers, instead of turning to those other branches of weaving with which power did not interfere, and for which an increased demand was arising, continued an attempt to struggle against a power with which they were unable to compete, except by a reduction of wages, which reduced the operatives to the minimum of subsistence; added to all this, the workmen, perceiving the continued depression of their wages, and not knowing the true cause, attributed it to the avarice of their employers, and vainly attempted, by combinations and strikes among themselves, to fix and raise their wages, and to compel the employer to pay more for labour than there were funds to supply. But these attempts, though always acting injuriously, and leaving the operatives in a worse condition than before, were of short duration; starvation soon compelled the weavers to strike to their employers. The Drogheda manufacturers attempted to introduce in 1827 a description of coarse sheeting, not made in England, and carried on the manufacture with great success for some time; there was an immediate advance on the wages of the weavers. The operatives, on the advance, concluded that their former wages had resulted from the will of their employers, and that even then they could afford to pay them higher wages; the consequence was, a strike so extensive and continued that the orders could not be fulfilled; the trade consequently went away, and has never since returned.

Mr. Patrick White, an extensive manufacturer and intelligent witness, states: "The rates of wages of weavers here are not lower than they were in 1834 and 1835. The last turn-out among the weavers was in 1836; they wanted to force the employers to alter the lengths and to make them pay by the yard. The rise given by the manufacturers did not last more than three months. Turns-out have had always an evil tendency, and a fall always takes place after them. I recollect another circumstance connected with a turn-out which occurred in the year 1827; at that time the weavers were paid very fair wages, 3*d.* a yard for nine-inch sheeting, for which there was a very good demand; the weavers took it into their heads to get higher wages, because they knew the manufacturers wanted the goods, and turned out for 1 ½*d.* a yard more. The manufacturers did not and could not give the rise. The weavers held out seven weeks; the manufacturers then gave the advance in order to get their warps worked up. The consequence was the demand fell off, and the orders had to be sent to another place; and this turn-out drove that description of weaving (which paid the weavers best) out of the town, and has not been carried on to the same extent since." Mr. Nicholas Whitworth states: "I have been informed that there was a very fine trade of sheeting, in which men of large capital were embarked, which was driven from Drogheda by a turn-out. The weavers of this sheeting went off to Barnsley, and never appeared here since." And again, "I do not attribute the distress of the weavers to a want of combination; quite the reverse." Mr. John Chadwick, a buyer of linen cloth in the Drogheda market for 35 years, states, "From what I have heard from manufacturers, the turns-out were very injurious to the trade; that is, combinations amongst the men to force an advance of wages. I have heard that they were the cause of driving the sheeting and dowlas linens out of the market."

I have no evidence of any injurious effects from embezzlement or from detention of the web beyond what would be expected necessarily to arise from the imperfect state of the dwellings and looms of the weavers. I have stated what appears to me from the evidence and my own investigations to be the principal causes of the low rate of wages paid for hand-loom labour. The evidence contains much additional matter on the subject.

In the consideration of the causes of the present state of the trade in Drogheda, I have confined myself to those circumstances which were likely to affect the state of the trade in the locality I was considering, bearing in mind what I have already stated as to the injurious effects of legislative enactments on the linen trade of Ireland. Other causes, besides those I have stated, have been mentioned by the several witnesses as peculiarly affecting the linen trade of Drogheda. Mr. Whitworth details in his evidence at considerable length the effects he conceives the monopoly of the Bank of Ireland, and the want of banking accommodation, equal to that enjoyed by the Scotch manufacturers, to have produced.

Mr.

Mr. P. White considers that injurious effects arise to the weavers from the custom adopted at Drogheda of paying them in advance; also, that the manufacturers at Drogheda sell to buyers who dispose of the goods in the Dublin market, and that the jobber must have a profit on the goods, which the Drogheda manufacturers lose. He also states, that the manufacturers at Drogheda do not get their yarn at first cost, they generally buy their yarn from those to whom they sell their linens; they have not the same banking accommodation as the Scotch, which enables the latter to purchase yarn and sell their linens at a lower price than the Drogheda manufacturers. By a reasonable command of money the Scotch manufacturers are enabled to give longer credit, and to stand up against any temporary fluctuation in the market. He says, also, that there is not as much flax grown as there was, nor as much as is required for the consumption of the country. Mr. Malone attributes the low rate of wages the weavers get to the ease with which the trade is learned, a youth of 14 or 17 can weave linen as well as an adult, and hence arises the temptation to which the weavers are exposed of putting their children to weaving, and the tendency to early marriages. He also states, that he puts his work out nine or ten miles off; not to have it woven cheaper, but because he thinks it is in general made cleaner in the country. He says, "sometimes the weavers keep the work out a month or two beyond the proper time; but I suppose they get other work from other manufacturers in the meantime. I think the practice of paying the workmen in advance injurious to the men; but they oftentimes are so poor, that if it was not done, they could not live. I give the weavers I employ now constant employment, never keep them an hour idle; but some of them do not work constant for me, as they go out and take agricultural labour, particularly during the harvest and potato-digging season; town as well as country weavers do this. Some of the country weavers I employ have small portions of land; by far the greater portion have not any. I think the weavers get through their work easier now than they could 10 or 20 years ago; the cause is, that the yarn manufactured 10 or 20 years ago was spun by hand, and much more difficult to weave than the mill-spun which is now used. Hand-spun yarn is, however, still used for weft."

I have received considerable evidence on the causes not peculiarly affecting the trade of Drogheda, but productive of injurious consequences to the trade in general. The laws affecting the importation of foreign corn, according to all the witnesses, act most injuriously on hand-loom labour and the manufactures of the country in general. Mr. Malone and Mr. White, at considerable length, state their opinion on this important question. Mr. Whitworth says, "The operation of the corn laws I look upon as the cause of the stoppage of foreign orders; it has operated in this way, when we would not take the corn they had to spare, they would not take the fabrics we had to spare. Corn and timber being the only article of exchange they had to give us for our manufactures, more especially in the Baltic, our corn laws have given an unnatural impetus to the manufactures of America and the Continent. They operate in this way also, that while the corn is kept at a high price in this country, it is kept at an unnaturally low price on the Continent for a want of demand for it. While corn continues at a high price either in this or any country, it enhances the price of every other article of food in the same proportion; while on the other hand, the low price of corn in any country reduces the price of every other kind of provision, so that the whole effect seems to be this, that while the corn laws in England are supported, we have to manufacture, with food at a very high price, against the manufacturers of the Continent, with food at a very low price. As a proof that this view is correct, I would just instance one example: It is well known that at Barnsley they have had a very extensive export trade in linen drills, for weaving which the weavers there have been able to earn 25*s.* to 30*s.* a week; while in France, the same article, to my knowledge, was manufactured last year, the weaver receiving only 5*s.* a week. The natural consequence is, that the French are lowering the trade at Barnsley. This is further confirmed by the large export of linen yarn both from England and Ireland, which has been so great of late that the French have applied to their government to lay on an almost prohibitory duty." Mr. Ennis states, "The effects of the corn laws are injurious; they injure us in this way: I had an American gentleman at my house; he looked over the different descriptions of goods in this town; he said they were goods that would answer the New York market very well, but that he thought they were much dearer than the German goods. The

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cause of the difference is obvious; the German weavers eat untaxed bread, the English taxed. If we rely on the home trade we can never give fair wages; the weavers are so numerous that they would soon overstock the home market; and they have a right to take away any bar that may be in the way of their trade, or their being able to earn at their trade sufficient wages. When the home market is overstocked, they have nothing to look to but the foreign trade; they are met by the corn laws there, and are forced into competition with men, as I said before, who eat untaxed bread. The conclusion I would draw from this is, that the corn laws are the great obstacle now to the prosperity of the trade." As to the moral condition of the weavers, they are represented as a well-conducted body of men, and no evidence as to their dishonesty or intemperance as a class has been laid before me. Mr. Ennis, a magistrate, and formerly connected with the linen trade, states, " I consider the weavers the best-conducted class in the country; under all their privations and difficulties, it is a matter of surprise to me that they are so well conducted. The morals of the inhabitants of the town are, I think, if anything improving; there is less intemperance." It has been, however, stated, that the weavers suffer much from a want of forethought and frugality, and that many who earn 10*s.* a week are worse off than those who earn only 5*s.* or 6*s.*, and that in many cases they do not use the diligence they might.

As to their educational or intellectual state, they are represented as anxious to send their children to school as far as could be expected from their low pecuniary condition, and considering the value of their children's labour to them. On this subject, Mr. Whitworth states, " I think the weavers would be anxious to educate their children if they could spare their labour; if their children were all sent to school, there would not be sufficient school-room, but I think there is sufficient day-school accommodation for the children that apply. I think there are Sunday schools wanted, there being no Sunday schools for the great bulk of the population. There are several Protestant Sunday schools. There are at present no Roman-catholic Sunday schools. There is one now fitting up for adults at the Convent. The Protestant Sunday schools are well attended and well conducted, but the education which can be given at the best Sunday school is far too limited. The condition of the weavers themselves as to education is very low. I do not see, as things are now, any chance of the rising class of weavers being in a better condition in this respect."

From the old and badly-appointed looms, three-fourths not being fit to use, I would be led to suppose that the weavers did not understand the principles of the implements they use or the means of improving them; but this is attributed to their poverty, which prevents their obtaining better looms or putting the old ones into a proper state of repair. They are totally ignorant of the number or accessibleness of the markets for their labour, or the rates of wages paying for the description of cloth woven in other districts. They know not the circumstances by which their trade is affected, or the relation in which they stand to other classes of hand-loom weavers or to other trades. They neither read books nor subscribe to book societies. There is a mechanics' institution at Drogheda lately established and conducted with praiseworthy spirit, but the weavers stated they were too poor, though most anxious to join it, to pay the annual subscription, 14*s.* per annum. This objection will, I doubt not, be shortly in a great degree removed by lowering the amount of the subscription; many of the weavers stated they would be most anxious to join it, and would willingly pay 8*s.* or 10*s.* a year for the purpose.

Belfast.

Belfast is the great emporium of the linen trade of Ireland, and the centre to which the linens, not only of the several counties of Ulster, but also of the linen-weaving districts of the west of Ireland, are sent for sale. Large quantities of linen are directly exported from Belfast to foreign countries; but the greater quantity is sent through Liverpool. Belfast is also the great linen-yarn market of Ireland, where the principal manufacturers obtain their supply of either Irish, Scotch, English or foreign yarn. The amount of the value of the hand-spun yarn sold, per annum, in Belfast has been stated to be 100,000 *l.* Extensive mills, to the number of 15 in the town, besides four others in the neighbourhood, for

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for the spinning of linen yarn, have been established; and the yarn they produce is equal in quality to any made in the United Kingdom. One-fourth of the flax for their consumption has been stated to be imported. Belfast, though employing few hand-loom linen weavers, is the principal point for arriving at a sound view of the general condition of the hand-loom linen weavers of Ireland, without we suppose their condition not to be affected by the general increase or decrease of the demand for the article on which their labour is employed. The amount of linens sold in Belfast is stated to be progressively on the increase; and the first commission agents in the town stated, that at no former period was either the home consumption or the foreign trade so extensive.

I shall now lay before the Commissioners the condition of the hand-loom linen weavers in this district, and the causes of that condition. The hand-loom weavers of Belfast and its vicinity are chiefly employed on the manufacture of cotton fabrics. I was not able to procure an accurate return of the hand-loom linen weavers employed in Belfast, and its immediate vicinity; but their numbers do not, I consider, amount to more than from 600 to 800, though they have been stated to be from 700 to 900. Hand-loom linen weaving factories have lately been established in Belfast, and its linen weaving is rapidly extending. These weavers are principally employed on canvass, sacking, damasks, single and double, and coarse linens. How far the establishment of these factories may be conducive to the interest of the weavers, and what opening for the other classes of hand-loom weavers is likely to result from the extension of the linen trade in the town and its vicinity, are important points for consideration.

Mr. Maclerath, linen, sack, and canvass manufacturer, states, "I have got two factories, and besides give out work in the country. In the one factory sacking and canvass is woven; in the other damasks and linens. I have 75 looms employed in the linen and damask factory; in the other, on sacking and canvass, 33 looms. We have from eight to ten apprentices; those apprentices are engaged from one year and a half to two and three years. We pay the apprentices from 11 *d.* to 18 *d.* a spangle; our apprentices at 18 *d.* a spangle uniformly earn 12 *s.* a week, frequently more; and those at the lowest price from 4 *s.* up. We pay our apprentices at this rate, because, when we took them, we agreed for the time they were bound to us to pay them at it; and if the value of their labour rose, we would have had the advantage * * * * *. All those apprentices to whom I now refer were weavers before they came to us; I speak of them as apprentices learning the damask mode of weaving. The cost of the jacquard looms we use for damask varies from 3 *l.* 10 *s.* to 10 *l.* I do not charge loom rent to any of our hands, apprentices or others; I have, for a short period, charged it in plain work, but never charged it for want of work being finished in a proper time; I gave up charging loom rent because I knew the men would rather have their wages lessened to the amount of the loom rent than have it deducted as a charge against their wages. The average wages of our journeymen are from 5 *s.* to 10 *s.* a week, above deductions. A dozen cloths made in the week, which is the very lowest that any weaver would make, would produce 5 *s.*, above all expenses; I have known men bringing in three dozen of cloths in the week. We seldom fine our men; many weeks we do not fine a single shilling; we part with our men if we find it necessary to fine them, as in all cases of fines we must lose most, as no fines we would inflict could compensate us for the loss we sustain in the bad work. Whenever a weaver brings in a web, there is an immediate settlement with him for it, if he expresses a wish to go away; if he does not express this wish, there is no settlement until the pay-day following his bringing in the cloth; and we have no regulation which would tend to keep a man in our employment without his own desire to remain. No change is ever made in the price of weaving of the piece in the loom * * *. The best of our canvass weavers, clear of expenses, can earn from 10 *s.* to 14 *s.* a week; a middling weaver can earn 8 *s.* a week; this, I think, is about the lowest. Our broad canvass weavers can earn from 10 *s.* to 14 *s.* 6 *d.* a week; one of the lowest 10 *s.* a week. Our fines, during the whole year, in our canvass factory, did not amount to 1 *l.* Our weavers in Brown-street Square are seldom in our debt, except in extreme cases of sickness or death, or when we give them cloth for bedding at their own special request." I quote the evidence of Mr. Maclerath, as he was strongly charged by one of the weavers, Thomas Simington, with refusing to pay for one web until another was in the loom, and so on. As the weavers are prevented from leaving their employers while their web is in an

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unfinished state, by the Arbitration Act, I investigated this case as carefully as was in my power; and, from the evidence of both parties when brought together, and other witnesses, I am of opinion Simington's accusation was greatly exaggerated, and, in the principal points, totally false; a feeling of bitterness and distrust was, however, manifest which should never exist between employer and operative, for which blame must attach to both parties. I also quote the evidence of Mr. M'Cracken, as bearing strongly on the important question, as to the effects of hand-loom weaving factories.

Mr. Francis M'Cracken, sail-cloth manufacturer, states, "I have 40 looms in a hand-loom weaving factory, 23 employed; I have also seven at work in the country. I make all kinds of linens, up to 8-hundreds. I pay 5 *s.* for the weaving of a sail-cloth web of 40 yards. A man is very idle and negligent if he does not make two pieces in the week; my best workmen, by working four days in the week, can make two pieces, and three pieces if they work the six days * * *. Any man that was not idle or ill conducted could earn a good livelihood at linen weaving. I send my sail cloth to North America, Buenos Ayres, the West Indies, England, and Scotland; I got an order the other day from New South Wales. I would be kept too long out of my money, and it would not be worth while, at my time of life, to scatter my property over the world."

Mr. Crouch, a linen manufacturer, who employs 59 looms in his factory, states, "I have also 50 looms to which I give out work. In the factory we get back our work in half the time, on an average, that we get it back from the looms to which we give out work. I cannot form an estimate as to what the country weavers will make, as compared with our factory hands; they work at other pursuits, farming, &c. &c. &c. We pay the same rate both to our out and factory weavers; but the out-weavers do not earn from us more than half the sum our factory weavers do, as they often work at land of their own, or land of others. We have to make greater deductions from our out than from our factory weavers for short weft; the weavers can waste and embezzle it less in the factory * * *. We never advance our weavers money. There is nothing to prevent our weavers leaving our employment, but the finishing of our web. We never oblige a weaver to take out a new web before we settle with him for the old one; we pay the same day the cloth is brought in." He also states that he would not take an order that he would be obliged to give to his out weavers to make up; for if he was obliged to give them an order for 1,000 pieces, he would have to give out 1,500, in order to get the 1,000 done in time. Among the operatives Samuel M'Kenny states: "I can earn 10 *s.* a-week above all expenses, by working 14 hours a day in Mr. M'Cracken's sail-cloth factory."

The hand-loom weavers have a great dislike to hand-loom weaving factories, or lock-ups as they call them; they attribute as a reason that it puts them more in the power of the employers, and prevents the free exercise of their labour. These factories certainly put them more out of the power of the dangerous temptations to which they are otherwise exposed, temptations which are alike injurious to themselves and their trade. I do not believe that the factory system prevents the free exercise of their labour. Several attempts were made to show that rules were adopted which had a tendency to prevent the operatives from leaving the factories, but the weight of evidence goes to contradict this supposition, and in no one instance did they make out their case. The restraint and regular hours of a factory are the real cause of the dislike; and though I can easily account for, and make allowances for, this feeling, I cannot, in duty to the hand-loom weavers, refrain from stating, that I think the introduction of hand-loom weaving factories a benefit to their trade, and one to which, when more generally established under proper regulation, I shall look as one of the great remedies for the evils to which they are now subjected. They prevent irregularity of work to make up for the lost time, which is not only injurious to their own comfort and health, but deteriorates from the quality of their work and injures the character of their trade. They ensure to the manufacturer greater punctuality in the execution of his orders, and preserve the industrious weavers from the injurious effects of the idle or dissipated, who by their want of steady attention to their trade, may prevent the orders of the employer from being executed.

Hand-loom weavers are placed in a different position to what they were; they have difficulties to contend against which they had not before—difficulties which must be overcome by themselves; and they must either prepare to adapt themselves to the circumstances in which they are placed, or quit the

the trade. I never met a well-conducted hand-loom weaving factory which did not add to the earnings of the weavers, and better enable the manufacturer to stand against the competition to which he was subjected. Domestic manufacture, and a scattered population, were the great evils of the linen trade of the north of Ireland, when the weavers had less powerful evils to contend against. The prosperity of the trade depends not only on the concentration of capital which has and is taking place, but on the concentration and regularity of labour which is best maintained, and almost only ensured by the restraints and regular hours of a factory.

The linen weavers in Belfast are better off than those employed on other fabrics, and the weavers employed in hand-loom factories are better off than those to whom work is given out and who weave in their own houses. Though isolated exceptions may occur, and though contradictory evidence may be quoted, I am convinced of the fact. The linen weavers of Belfast are too few compared with the other descriptions of weavers, to treat more fully of their condition separately.

Castlewellan.

From Belfast I proceeded to inquire into the linen trade in the county of Down. At Castlewellan I visited Mr. Moreland, an extensive manufacturer, who employs 700 linen weavers, he had previously furnished to the Commission a statement of the earnings and condition of his weavers, to which he referred me; but he stated that the linen trade in the north of Ireland was in a healthier condition than it had been for many years. This he attributed in a great degree to the increased demand in the French market. The agriculture of the county of Down has been greatly improved since the weavers ceased to work on their own accounts, and occupy farms which were formerly necessary to them, and which owing to the consequent competition encouraged high rent and great subdivisions of farms. The agricultural labourers, he stated, in his neighbourhood were earning from 10*d.* to 1*s.* a day, while the linen weavers earned from 6*s.* to 10*s.* a week. He also stated he could take 100 additional hands and wanted them, but that the competition for weavers would not permit of his obtaining them without a rise of wages, which would not allow of his competing with foreign manufacturers; that he had orders from Paris which he could not take without employing more weavers and raising his wages, which the prices offered him would not permit of, owing to the competition of the Belgium weavers; that when the Belgian trade is dull, at harvest seasons, the French demand could not be supplied. He stated that although the wages of the weavers are lower than they were 15 or 20 years ago, there were counterbalancing circumstances in the favour of the weaver: provisions cheaper, yarn better, and more easily woven. He stated that he had a short time before 40 power-looms, but that he gave them up when he commenced spinning yarn; that he had applied the power-looms to coarse linens and unions, and that he was of opinion that the power-looms would never be able so to compete with hand-loom labour as to drive it out of the market, and that he considered there were not too many hand-loom weavers; he added, that the middle class who used to manufacture from 30 to 40 pieces a week, and to dispose of them in the brown markets, had gone out. Fifteen years ago he purchased his linens from these small manufacturers: the trade is still carried on, but to a small extent, and by a lower class. Hand-spun yarn was very generally used until within the last three years; now comparatively very little is used; he said, that this had discontinued spinning amongst the women, but they had turned their attention to other things, weaving for instance, and were the best weavers except on the very strong and broad goods; he stated, that there was a quantity of muslin flowered by the young women in the neighbourhood.

Cornelius Hill, a weaver of Lisnafin, stated, that he could weave a web of the linen he works on, an 18^{00}, in a fortnight; that he got 1*l.* for the weaving, and that it was washed and dressed for him besides.

Rathfriland.

At Rathfriland, where the weavers still carry on a considerable manufacture on their own account, I found that the greater part of the weavers occupied

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small portions of land, from one to four acres; and that they occasionally worked for hire at agricultural labour, in addition to the time they were employed on their own land. Those who worked for manufacturers received for weaving 20^{00} linens 22 *s.* the piece of 54 yards long, and it generally took a moderately good weaver three weeks, at 12 hours' work each day, to weave the piece. Some good weavers wove it in a fortnight, working from 14 to 16 hours a day; they had to warp the chain and wind the weft which cost them, supposing that they had to hire a person to do it for them, 1 *s.*, and the dressing of the web cost them about 5 *d.* or 6 *d.* for 10^{00}, 52 yards in the web. They received 7 *s.* 6 *d.* for weaving, and it will take a fair weaver, at 12 hours' work a day, 10 days to weave the piece. The expense for winding weft, warping and dressing, did not amount to more than 10 *d.* for 15^{00}, 52 yards to the piece; they received 12 *s.* for the weaving and it took a moderately good weaver, at 12 hours' work per day, 12 days to weave it; for the winding of weft, warping and dressing, 1 *s.* 2 *d.* was a fair allowance. I found that the demand for fine linens was on the increase; that manufacturers sold their cloths directly to the bleachers, or sent them to their agents at Belfast, and did not dispose of them to jobbers in the neighbouring linen markets, as had been the practice. The sales of webs in the brown linen market, by weavers who made up the cloth on their own account, was very inconsiderable, though Rathfriland was regarded as one of the principal brown linen markets in the country; my evidence goes to show that there is not one-tenth of the linen made up by weavers for the brown market, on their own account, that there was some few years ago. The weavers who now work for employers are a different class from those who formerly worked on their own account. The farmers were formerly the manufacturing weavers, and divided their attention between the loom and their farm. The class who now work for employers formerly composed those who worked occasionally as day labourers for hire for the farmers, either on their land or on their looms. All those farmers who held from 10 to 20 acres and upwards have left off weaving, and only those who have from four to ten acres of land now attempt to carry on the manufacture of linen on their own account for the brown markets. The weavers who work continually for employers are able to earn much more than those who weave on their own account, or than the agricultural labourers even while they can obtain employment. Moreover, the weavers get constant work. Bad weavers who do not make their cloth of sufficient quality, and have but one loom to depend on for support, and who would not be able to earn their bread at any other labour, are of course exceptions; the weavers in this vicinity have from two to four looms in each family, which adds considerably to the total amount of the earnings for the support of themselves and their families.

Kilkeel.

From Rathfriland, I visited Kilkeel, situated in a remote and wild district lying between Carlingford Bay and the Mourne Mountains, by which it is separated from the rest of the county. I found only one manufacturer putting out work here, and the rates of the earnings of the weavers was much lower than in the other parts of the country. The weavers earned only from 2 *s.* 3 *d.* to 5 *s.* a week. They principally support themselves by means of putting out manure on land, for which they get the crop of potatoes free of rent, and by taking a little conacre ground; many of them are cottier tenants, and pay the rent of their cabins and potatoe gardens in agricultural labour to the individuals they hold under.

I found the worst possible religious and political party spirit existing between the different sects in this district, and an unusual degree of intemperance, which proceeds from large quantities of whiskey being sold without license. The weavers were totally ignorant of the rates of wages paying for weaving through the other parts of the country, and devoid of the energy and intelligence that would enable them to endeavour to better their condition in their own locality, or remove where they might obtain more favourable channels for the disposal of their labour.

Within 15 miles of this place I found advertisements in all directions for weavers, and manufacturers offering a premium for a supply of hands. Nothing could

could appear much lower than the moral, educational and intellectual state of the majority of the weavers about Kilkeel, and no means for adequate educational or religious instruction appear to have been adopted. The great majority of the weavers of Kilkeel are Protestants, and there is only one school which the Church of England Protestant children are allowed to attend, with the consent of their pastors, at which the average attendance is from 150 to 180. The population of the parish is 14,000, and the Protestants comprise one-half.

Banbridge.

From Kilkeel I proceeded to Banbridge, the principal seat of the linen manufacture of the north of Ireland. The numerous falls, and the extensive water power afforded by the river Ban and its tributaries, the undulatory formation of the surface of the country, so well adapted for bleach greens, the central position of the district, as regarded the great linen weaving counties, and its contiguity to Belfast, attracted, at an early period, attention as a favourable location for the investment of capital in the linen trade. Between Banbridge and Guilford, some of the first manufacturers who invested large capital in the linen trade, established themselves, and here the great experiment of placing the linen trade of Ireland on a new foundation was tried: the great subdivision of the capital invested in the linen trade, the want of a proper division of labour being applied to it, and a direct market for the disposal of the produce year after year, rendered it more apparent that it could not be longer continued on its former system. All the attempts on the part of the Legislature to protect the trade, and the Linen Board to encourage it, had only aggravated the evils they intended to remedy. On the repeal of the protecting duties, and the introduction of mill-spun yarn into England and Scotland, it became evident to the capitalists of the north of Ireland either that the linen trade should be placed on a new foundation, and conducted on the improved principles that were being applied to its manufactures in the other portions of the United Kingdom, or that Ireland should lose its linen trade altogether. The question became not as to whether the employment of linen weavers, by extensive manufacturers, and confining them to the mere process of weaving, was or was not more advantageous than the old system, where the producer of the raw material, the weaver of the cloth and the merchant who disposed of it, was the same individual; but whether it would be more profitable to alter the system or lose the trade. The result was, the linen manufacture was placed on a new foundation, and men of extensive capital and skill became engaged in it. The linen trade was not only thus preserved, but extended, and all the individuals engaged in its operations here have been bettered by the change, as I shall now proceed to show. The linen manufacturers in the neighbourhood of Banbridge not only give out linen webs to weavers on an extensive scale, but have also established numerous mills for the spinning of yarn, and extensive bleach greens. Many of the manufacturers spin their own yarn, and bleach their own cloth, and all of them either dispose of their goods at their own offices, to the agent of their customers, export them directly from Belfast, or consign them there to the great linen factors, who dispose of them on commission.

The appearance of the country around Banbridge indicates a degree of comfort in all classes of the population not to be met in other parts of Ireland; and the hand-loom weavers, who form the great majority of the population, appears fully to participate in this more than average appearance of comfort. I did not here find to the same extent the unhappy feelings of distrust between the employers and the operatives, which act so injuriously in many of the other weaving districts; however anxious the operatives may have been to impress on the Commission the conviction of the low state of their earnings, (without which impression all weavers appeared to consider no good could result to them), there was not that anxiety manifested grossly to exaggerate, and to make the Commission a vehicle for receiving attacks upon their employers, which I found in other places.

The descriptions of linens the weavers in the neighbourhood of Banbridge are employed on are linens from 10^{00} to 24^{00}, from 16^{00} to 24^{00}, the principal description of linen woven; there are also linen drill of from 10^{00} to 19^{00}. On a

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16^{00} linen, which can be woven in 12 days, by a mode rate weaver, at 12 hours' work each day. The weaver receives 16*s.*, but 2*s.* 6*d.* must be deducted for the expence of winding, dressing, and light. For linen of 21^{00}, which can be wove in 18 days, at 12 hours' work each day, they receive 31*s.*, subject to 2*s.* deductions for winding weft, and 1*s.* 6*d.* for light and dressing. For 10^{00}, which can be woven in 9 days, at 12 hours' work each day, they receive 7*s.* 6*d.*, but with a deduction of 1*s.* 6*d.* for light, dressing, and winding For linen drills of 12^{00}, ¾ wide, of which 2 pieces, of 86 yards long, can be woven in three weeks, they get 9*s.* a piece for the weaving, and 10*d.* a piece will cover the expenses of winding, dressing, and light. On 19^{00} drills, which can be woven in a fortnight, the weavers get 15 *s.* a piece for the weaving, 2 *s.* to be deducted for light, winding, and dressing. Mr. Carson, partner with Mr. Brice Smith, who employs 2,000 hand-loom weavers, states his weavers can earn from 4 *s.* to 10 *s.* a week. All the weavers can obtain constant employment. I found no real variation in the rates paying by the different employers. Some manufacturers were paying from 6 *d.* to 1 *s.* a piece higher than others; but I found either some difference required in the execution of the work, or a variation in the description of yarn, or in the terms on which the chain was given to the weaver, which accounted for the difference in some cases. I asked the weavers, "Why they continued to work for a manufacturer whom they stated paid them less than others were paying?" and the answer was, "Because when others lowered their wages, our employers did not." Mr. Carson states, on this subject, "there are some manufacturers, when trade is good, pay higher wages than others, from 1 *s.* to 1 *s.* 3*d.* per piece, in order to get hands, but when trade gets depressed, cast off the weavers altogether. The weavers, knowing this, prefer to remain with those whom they know will give constant work. Besides those employers who give (nominally) higher wages, fine higher, or make up their cloth in some other way. I do not think the employers of hand-loom weavers have any more power over their workmen than the employers of other labour, or have it in their power to give lower wages at any time than the markets will admit. The competition in the trade prevents that."

The average number of looms in each family is three. The wives and younger children of the weavers are not only employed in winding the weft for their looms, but in winding the yarn for the warps for the manufacturers, and can earn at this from 1*s.* 2*d.* to 2*s.* a day. Those who work as journeymen get 4*d.* out of every shilling they earn, and are provided with food, lodging, and looms; this is the general mode of payment. The weavers in the neighbourhood of Banbridge do not, except in few instances, hold land; and a good number live in the immediate neighbourhood of their employers, in small cottages built for them, held under their employers. The rent averages from 3 *l.* to 4 *l.* per annum. A great proportion of the weavers are young persons of both sexes, from the ages of 14 to 20, and the average amount of their wages is little less than that of adults. Mr Dunbar, who employs 1,700 looms, and is acquainted with the trade since 1805, states, "I have seen the linen trade brisker, but never in a more healthy and promising condition, considering it is only recovering from the effects of the American panic. The demand for linens is progressively on the increase, and so are the wages of the hand-loom weavers." Also, "20 years ago, it was thought necessary to support our trade by prohibiting foreign linens and giving a bounty on our exports. Now, without all this, we are sending large quantities of goods to France, though they lay a heavy duty, from 12 to 15 per cent., on our goods. We produce double the quantity of linens within those 15 years. Some years ago there was a competition between the Irish and French linens in the American market, and now we have not only driven the French out of that market, but send linens to France." Mr. Carson, who, as I have already stated employs 2,000 looms, states, "We have lately received orders for brown goods from France. (The duty is double on white.) The demand for French goods was lately introduced. There never was a Frenchman to buy goods here directly until six or eight months ago, and the trade is now very much on the increase."

At Ashfield, between Banbridge and Dromore, I examined David Lindsay, esq., J. P., who employs 950 linen weavers; he states, "I am a manufacturer of linen, unions, and cotton cloths for the last 10 years; prior to that period I bought linens in the country markets on my own account and for my father, and got them bleached. One half of what I bought passed through the hands of agents, who charged commission on them; the commission charged at the Linen Hall,

Hall, Dublin, was 3½ per cent.; the remainder I sold to order. I bought the linens in the brown markets mostly from weavers, sometimes from small manufacturers, and sometimes from jobbers, who had bought up linens from the weavers. I commenced to manufacture 10 years ago, in place of buying up linens, because I thought it would be more profitable; I found it so, and have made much more money by manufacturing than I did by buying and bleaching. There is not one weaver now in a hundred who weaves on his own account in this district; in the early part of my life almost all the linen was made up by weavers on their own account. Many weavers used to grow their own flax, have it spun, warp it, and weave it; others bought the yarn in the market when they had not as much flax of their own as would employ them fully, by which they lost a great deal of time.

"Manufacturers with large capital are coming in more generally into the trade every year. The introduction of mill-spun yarn, the system of credit and banking accommodation, drove the trade out of the hands of the weavers and small manufacturers, and placed it in the hands of large manufacturers and capitalists. Formerly there were fewer inferior weavers than there are at present; the introduction of mill-spun yarn enabling worse tradesmen, young boys and girls, old men and women who could not weave hand-spun yarn, to weave it. The superior weavers I do not think are paid as well as they were when they worked for themselves; but there is vastly more weaving than there was; those who could not and would not be employed formerly are now employed; men who were only able to weave 10^{00} to 15^{00} with hand-spun yarn, can weave from 15^{00} to 22^{00} with mill spun * * * * *. I do not think there are now more hand-loom weavers than there is work for them to do. I do not think, on the same fabrics, there is any real difference between the rates of wages paying by manufacturers, nor do I think a difference could for any length of time exist; wages, on a depressed state of the trade occurring, are lowered somewhat sooner by some manufacturers than others; the wages of the hand-loom weavers do not depend on the will of their employers. The employers of hand-loom weavers have no greater power over them than the employers of any other kind of labourers whose labour is essential to them; the demand for labour must regulate its price * * *. I employ 1,000 weavers, 950 of these are employed on different branches of linens, 50 on cotton drills. The linens are divided into plain linens, from 9 to 23^{00}, linen drills from 30 to 110 beers, diapers 3 to 10 quarters wide. The cotton weavers are employed on cotton drills from 60 to 100 beers, and on plain cotton from 27 to 57 inches; on sheetings from 42 inches to 108. I find the cotton weavers can earn as much as the linen, for if they did not they would not continue to work on it. There is very little cotton wove about here. My weavers can all weave both cotton and linen; but a cotton weaver of drills or shirtings cannot be changed suddenly or profitably to weave a higher description of yarn. The following is a return of the earnings, and the manner in which my weavers were paid since 1831:

Wages for Weaving.

Days.	Set.	1831.	1832.	1833.	1834.	1835.	1836.	1837.	1838.
		s.	s.	s.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.
		4/4 Linens, 52 yards.							
15	12	11	10	10	10 –	9 6	8 6	8 –	9 –
	13	12	11	11	11 –	10 6	9 6	9 –	10 –
	14	14	13	13	13 –	12 6	11 6	10 –	11 6
18	15	18	16	16	16 –	14 6	12 6	11 –	12 6
	16	21	18	18	18 –	16 –	14 –	12 –	14 –
	17	23	20	20	20 –	18 –	16 –	13 –	15 6
21	18	27	23	23	23 –	20 6	18 –	14 –	17 –
	19	32	28	28	28 –	24 –	20 –	16 –	19 –
	20	36	32	32	32 –	28 –	22 6	18 –	22 –
26	21	42	38	38	38 –	32 –	25 6	20 –	25 –
28	22	48	42	42	42 –	36 –	28 –	24 –	30 –
	23	56	48	48	48 –	42 –	33 –	30 –	35 –

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Days.	Set.	1831.	1832.	1833.	1834.	1835.	1836.	1837.	1838.
		s.	*s.*	*s.*	*s. d.*	*s. d.*	*s. d.*	*s. d.*	*s. d.*
	Sheetings 5/4, 60 yards; 6/4, 52 yards.								
15	8	–	–	11	11 6	11 6	12 6	11 –	11 –
	9	–	–	13	13 –	13 –	14 –	11 6	11 6
	10	–	–	15	15 –	15 –	16 –	12 6	12 6
18	11	–	–	17	17 –	17 –	18 –	14 6	14 6
	12	–	–	19	19 –	19 –	20 –	16 –	16 –
	13	–	–	21	21 –	21 –	22 –	18 –	18 –
24	14	–	–	24	24 –	24 –	25 –	20 –	20 –
	15	–	–	27	27 –	27 –	28 –	22 –	22 –
	16	–	–	30	30 –	30 –	32 –	24 –	24 –

Days.	Beers.	1831.	1832.	1833.	1834.	1835.	1836.	1837.	1838.
		s.	*s.*	*s.*	*s.*	*s.*	*s.*	*s.*	*s.*
	Linen Drills, 84 yards.								
12	60	27	20	17	14	14	14	7	9
	65	28	21	18	15	15	15	8	10
	70	29	22	19	16	16	16	9	11
15	75	30	23	20	17	17	17	10	12
	80	31	24	21	18	18	18	11	13
	85	32	25	22	19	19	19	12	14
18	90	33	26	23	20	20	20	13	15
	95	34	27	24	21	21	21	14	16
	100	35	28	25	22	22	22	15	17
21	105	36	29	26	23	23	23	16	18
	110	37	30	27	24	24	24	17	19
24	115	38	31	28	25	25	25	18	20
	120	39	32	29	26	26	26	19	21

Deduct from the above prices, for dressing and tallow, and reed-hire, and light, 1 *s.* 6*d.* on the coarse, and 2 *s.* on the fine.

Ashfield, 25 October 1838. *D. Lindsay.*

Mr. Lindsay continues:—" I think if the agricultural labourers could get constant employment here, they would be better off than the hand-loom weavers; all other trades earn more; but hand-loom weaving is the most easy to be acquired, and the work is more easily performed.

" If a person wants to get his child taught weaving, not being a weaver himself, he sends his child to a weaver to be taught, who, for the labour of the child, teaches it, and gives it clothes, food, and lodging; this agreement is made from one to three years.

" I have 10 weavers who work for me in a factory; they are able, from the regularity of their work, and the superiority of their looms and tacklings, to earn much more than those to whom I give out work; the average number of looms each of my weavers have at work is at least two. My stoppages do not amount to two per cent. on the wages paid, and my over-payments for superior work exceed five per cent."

Dromore.

At Dromore I found the following to be the rate of the earnings of the weavers. On 12^{00} linens the weavers got 9*s.* 6*d.* for weaving the piece; this description of work is easily woven, and is generally performed by boys, girls, or old men. It generally takes from 14 to 15 days to weave the piece; deductions for light, winding and dressing amounts from 1*s.* to 1*s.* 6*d.*; 10*s.* 6*d.* is paid for the weaving of a 13^{00}, which can also be woven in from fourteen to fifteen days, with moderate labour; 1*s.* 6*d.* to be deducted for light, winding and dressing. For 14^{00} they get 11*s.* 6*d.* for the weaving of the piece; for 15^{00}, 12*s.* 6*d.* Both these descriptions of linens can be done in from 14 to 15 days, and 1*s.* 6*d.* is a fair deduction for light, winding

winding and dressing. For 16^{00} the weavers get 14*s.* for the weaving of the piece, which takes 18 days to weave, and the deduction for winding, light and dressing, ought to be 1*s.* 6*d.* For 17^{00} the weavers receive 15*s.* 6*d.*, which can be woven, by moderate work, in 18 days. For 18^{00} the weaver gets 17*s.* 6*d.* for the weaving of the piece; this can also be woven in 18 to 20 days, and 1*s.* 6*d.* is a fair deduction for winding, weft, light, and dressing. The 19^{00} and 20^{00} can be woven in the same time, and the weaver gets 20*s.* for the weaving of a 19^{00}, and 24*s.* for the weaving of a 20^{00}, 1*s.* 6*d.* to be deducted for light, winding of weft, and dressing; the weavers also, generally, get an advance of from 5*d.* to 6*d.* on webs peculiarly well wrought. For 21^{00} linens they get from 25*s.* to 28*s.* for weaving the piece. For 22^{00} from 30*s.* to 32*s.*; those can be woven in from 24 to 26 days each; deductions for winding, dressing, and light, 2*s.* to 2*s.* 6*d.* For a 23^{00} they get from 35 *s.* to 2*l.* 2*s.* for the weaving; and for a 24^{00}, 2*l.* 14*s*; these can be woven in 28 days, and the deductions for winding, dressing, and light, from 2*s.* 6 *d.* to 3*s.* For 25^{00} they get 3 *l.* 15*s.*; it takes five weeks to weave, and can be wove only by a superior weaver; the deduction for light, winding, would amount to about 4*s.* to 4 *s.* 6 *d.* The Commissioners will perceive how the earnings of the weavers here rise, according to the difficulties in, or the execution of, the work upon which their labour is employed. There is also a variation in the price paid for the weaving of the same hundred, but this arises from a greater number of shots of weft being required to be put to the piece, or one manufacturer requiring a better order of work than another. The average number of looms in each family is two: the earnings on linen drills amount to from 4 *s.* to 10 *s.* a week. The weavers all get constant employment, and my evidence goes fully to show that there are not more hand-loom weavers than there is work for them to do. Not many of the weavers in this neighbourhood hold land, but they are generally obliged to work for the individuals from whom they hold their cabins, at agricultural work, in the busy seasons; this is the agreement, and it acts most injuriously on their trade. The scarcity of agricultural labourers (the whole population being principally weavers) causes the landlords of the cabins and gardens to make this agreement. The wages of agriculturists' labour are higher here than in in other districts, and amount, in winter, to from 10 *d.* to 1 *s.* a day, and in harvest from 1 *s.* 3 *d.* to 1 *s.* 8*d.* When persons who are not weavers want to get their children taught weaving, they send their children to weavers to be taught, who, for the labour of the child, give it food, lodging, and clothes; this agreement is made for him from one to three years. A few weavers are employed in factories in this district, and it is stated that from the regularity of their work, and superiority of their tacklings, they are able to earn much more than those to whom work is given out. There is a considerable quantity of double and single damasks made in this neighbourhood, on which the weavers are able to earn from 1 *s.* to 3*s.* a day. Mr. Brown, one of the principal manufacturers in the trade, employing 250 weavers, gives the following evidence: "Within my recollection, for the last 20 years, our weavers can earn as much now as at any time within that period; the lowest of my weavers can earn 1*s.* 6 *d.* a day; the highest 3*s.*, by working 14 hours a day on a 10-quarter double damask, 82 ½ yards long. I pay 21 *l.* for the weaving; it would take a man three months, working 14 hours a day; he will have out of this to wind 340 hanks of weft, which would cost him 1 ½ *d.* a hank to get wound; he would also have to wind 234 hanks of warp, which will, at 4*d.* a score, be 3*s.* 11*d.*; the warping would cost him 2 *s.*; dressing 2 *s.*; light, 7 lbs. candles, at 7*d.* per lb., 4 *s.* 1*d.* There are only a few looms at this. The average earnings of all my weavers are 2*s.* 4*d.* a day." Mr. Brown makes the highest description of damask; and the numbers of damask weavers, for weaving his highest paying fabrics, are comparatively limited; the wages on the single damask, and old and new diapers are considerably lower, not amounting to more than from 4 *s.* to 5 *s.* 6 *d.* a week. The journeymen who are employed in this district generally get one-third of their earnings, and are provided with looms, board, and lodging. Apprentices get 1 *l.* a year, their board and lodging, and are taught the trade for the use of their labour. This agreement is generally made for from three to five years."

I examined, at Dromore, 14 of the weavers of Mr. Richardson, of Lisburn; he requires his weavers to sign a ticket, and to bind themselves to any decision he or his putter-out may make as to their cloth. The words of the agreement are:—

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" I agree that I will weave all yarns which I take from the office of James N. Richardson, Sons & Co., into good and sufficient cloth, in —— weeks at the farthest from date of delivery of the same; and that all cloth wove by me shall be left for inspection at the office, without appealing from whatever decision may be passed there.

" [Signature.]"

" [Witness.]

" [Date.]

I feel assured such an agreement could not be binding on the weaver; and I regret to find such a practice adopted by any manufacturer. The weavers state his deductions amount to 1 *s.* 10 *d.* a week on each. This, I am led to believe, is greatly exaggerated; and also that the amount of earnings has been given too low; the weavers stated they were only able to earn, viz. from 2 *s.* 4 *d.* to 2 *s.* 9 *d.* on 18 and 20^{00} linen: I know there were many other manufacturers in the immediate neighbourhood, under whom they could obtain double as much, and that four miles off, Dromara manufacturers were advertising and offering a premium for a supply of hands. I examined Mr. M'Leaner, putter-out to Mr. Richardson, and though he agrees with the weavers as to the rate of paying for the different hundreds, he differs with them materially as to the time it requires to weave the webs. Judging from the time taken by other weavers to weave the same hundreds, and from the deductions they are subject to, the statement of the weavers is considerably exaggerated.

Lurgan.

From the district of Dromore I proceeded to Lurgan, county Armagh, where I found the linen trade still carried on to a great extent by the weavers, who combined the office of both weavers and manufacturers. The weavers in this district generally hold small portions of land, from four to ten acres, purchase or grow their own flax, spin their own yarn, and weave their own cloth, and then dispose of it in the town market at Lurgan, which is one of the principal brown linen markets of the north of Ireland, next to Ballymena, which is the most extensive. Ballymena presents the strange and important feature that, while all the other brown markets of the kingdom have been rapidly declining, it has been increasing. The inquiry into that important district of the linen trade was conducted by Mr. Muggeridge. The numbers of pieces sold each market day at Lurgan market, on the average of the last two years, was stated to be 3,000. This does not include the pieces sold by private contract, of which there were no means of obtaining a return. The weavers who work for employers who put out work I found able to earn more than the weavers who made up goods on their own account for the town market. Few of the weavers were able to run the chances of the market, and are often obliged to sacrifice their goods sooner than return without selling them; they are, in many cases, obliged to seek for work from employers, to which they have a great dislike, until forced so to do by absolute necessity. Lawns, from 12^{00} to 22^{00} are the principal descriptions of linens sold in the Lurgan market; there is also a considerable quantity of double and single damask and linens, from 10^{00} to 18^{00}. From the apparent briskness and quantity of cloth, and persons in the market, I should, as a stranger, have imagined that the old system of the linen trade was in full vigour. The buyers stand upon elevated benches of stones, purchasing the cloth during the hour allotted for the sale. It was curious to see the crowds of weavers thrusting up their webs of cloth to the elevated buyers, and the anxiety with which they endeavoured to attract attention to their respective webs. The width of the web is marked on the cloth by the seal-masters, before they are exposed for sale; when the price per yard is agreed on, the buyer marks it on the cloth, and the seller takes it back to the seal-master to measure the length, and to see that it is marketable. If the seal-masters performed their duty, this process should be gone through before the cloth is offered for sale. The seller then, when the cloth is sealed, brings it back to the office of the buyer, to deliver it and get his money. The seal-master is answerable to the buyer that the web is not faulty, and that it is the length and breadth marked on it.

Most

Most numerous are the frauds practised on and by the seal-masters. The weavers often underlap the web, efface the seal and the mark of the price at which it was sold, and offer it to other buyers; they also endeavour to stretch the cloth after it is sold, and often injure and tear the web in the effort to do so. Cloth, thus stretched, shrinks again; and after the buyer brings it home he finds it is short of the quantity marked on it; he then summons the inspector of linens; he again summons the seal-master, who then endeavours to recover from the weaver, but is often baffled by the circumstance of the weavers giving fictitious names. The income of the inspector arises from the fines of the seal-master; he has a direct interest in the continuance of this injurious system of litigation, and is exposed to the constant temptation of a compromise with the seal-master. Nothing can be more injurious than the whole system. The seal-masters and inspector not only are a tax on the weaver, who pays so much for the marking of the web, but they prevent the buyer from using that circumspection which all purchasers should use. The system holds out not only temptations to fraud to the weavers, but to the seal-masters, who are generally also weavers, and sellers of cloth in the market. There seems to have been no care whatever bestowed on their selection.

A seal-master, if he followed the provisions of the Linen Act, could not seal and measure more than 10 webs between the time the webs come in and the hour appointed for the sale to commence, 10 o'clock. For the sealing of each web of 25 yards long the seal-master is entitled to 1 *d.* In order to obtain as many pence as he can within the limited time, he evades the duties imposed by the Act, and only measures the breadth of the web, which is done in an instant, and then seals it. The web is thus offered for sale without any real protection from fraud to the buyer. After each web is sold, it is returned to the seller, who has the custody of it until four o'clock, the hour for delivery and payment. During this interval the seller brings the web back to the seal-master, in order to get it measured, examined, and sealed at both ends. Had this process taken place before it was exposed for sale, and if the buyer, after the agreement for sale, did not return the cloth to the weaver, much of the fraud and inconvenience which now take place would be obviated.

I should earnestly recommend the abolition of both seal-masters, inspectors, and trustees, and the leaving of the market open for the buyer and seller to arrange their own bargains as their mutual interest would point out. The only drawback in my mind is, that I fear the adoption of any better regulations might tend to keep longer alive the old system of weavers making up cloth on their own account, and selling it in the market, a system which is gradually dying away, and which is, in my opinion, most injurious to the linen trade; but the present system of seal-master and inspector, as at present practically acted on, is too great a nuisance any longer to be continued.

There is a custom which is called "selling on redemption" adopted in this district. A number of small manufacturers hire out chains and weft to weavers. When the weaver makes the cloth, he brings it to the market, and when he can effect a sale, he pays 1 *s.* for the hire of the chain and weft, in addition to the price of the yarn; if he can only effect a sale with 6 *d.* profit over the value of the raw material, the hirer out of the yarn gets the 6 *d.* By far the greater portion of the weavers who manufacture for the market on their own account are holders of small farms of from five to fifteen acres. This circumstance not only induces but enables them to continue at the old system. Had they not in most cases the land to fall back upon, they could not stand against the fluctuations of the market, and would be obliged to look for work from employers who give out work. But though the farm enables the operative for a time to continue to weave on his own account, between the fluctuations of the profits he receives from weaving on this system, and the division of his attention between his farm and his loom, he generally becomes insolvent, unable to keep the farm, and obliged to take out work from employers in order to support himself. The agriculture of this district is not equal to that of the county Down, from the circumstance of a large portion of the holders of small farms being still weavers; but I am informed as this cause has decreased, the system of agriculture has been greatly improved. The weavers who work for employers are generally holders of small patches of land of from one to three acres; and I have met some individuals who held large farms of land, who took out webs from manufacturers. It has been stated that, on an average, all the weavers who take out work are engaged

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on hire as agricultural labourers for one month in the year, besides the time they devote to their own small patches of land. Nearly the entire population of the parishes of Drumcree, Shankhill, and Seago, is composed of weavers; and the wages of agricultural labour during harvest and seed-time are high. It is stated that there is full employment for all the hand-loom weavers, that many more young persons wove now than formerly, and that the females who used formerly to spin the hand-spun yarn, now in general weave. The average number of looms in each family amounts to two or three; those weavers who have not looms of their own, hire them, and they are charged for them 10 *s.* a year. Journeymen generally pay 3 *s.* 6 *d.* a week, for which sum they are provided in food and lodging, looms, winding of the weft, dressing, and tallow. In cases where a person, not a weaver, wishes to get his child brought up to the trade, he binds him, on a stamped indenture, for from three to five years, to a weaver; there is no fee paid, and the value of the child's labour is supposed to compensate for the trouble of teaching him, and the expense of board, lodging, and 1 *l.* per annum which the child gets for clothes. I found that the weavers employed by manufacturers on from 12^{00} to 22^{00} lawns could on the average earn clear, above all expenses, 6 *s.* a week on each loom by fair work. The depression of the trade in the year 1837 tended greatly to lower the average of the last three years, but the average earnings for that period may be reckoned, taking one hundred with the other, at 5 *s.* a week on each loom. A rise of 1 *s.* set on all lawn above 16^{00} had just taken place. One-seventh of the looms on lawns from 16^{00} to 20^{00} are worked by girls, and one-third by boys under 17 years of age. The ages at which children are put to the loom is stated to be 12, and a girl of 16 is stated to be able to earn as much as a man of 30. German, Dutch, and French yarn is generally used for the weft of the finer lawns, and its introduction into this country has tended to improve the quality of the lawns now made up, and greatly to extend the market for them. Mr. Druid, foreman to Mr. Greer, linen-manufacturer, states, "On 10/4 wide sheeting, 10^{00}, 26 yards to the piece, we pay 13 *s.* 6 *d.* for the weaving; did pay, three weeks ago, only 12 *s.* 6 *d.* It will take eight or nine fair days' work to weave the piece, at from 12 to 14 hours' work each day. On 5/8 diaper damask napkins, we pay 9 *s.* the piece of 36 yards. A good weaver will weave the piece in a week. The weaver has to wind the weft, which stands in or about 5½ *d* or 6 *d.*, and to provide light, dressing, and tallow, which amounts to 6 *d.* a week. Apprentice boys of 14 to 15 can and do weave this. We employ 120 looms (reckoning all kinds); 7 *s.* to 8 *s.* would be a fair average of the earnings of our weavers. Out of 120 looms, one-fourth are worked by girls under the age of 22, one-third by boys under the age of 20. A weaver makes most on the finer sets. The linen trade is now on the rise. There is as much made now as ever there was, and more than there was 25 years ago." Edward Hamilton, a cambric weaver, in part of his evidence, says, "I put my boys on the loom at 12, and my girls at 11; the girls can weave as well as the boys. After a year's teaching, they can earn 1 *s.* a day on 15^{00} lawns; they are paid 6 *s.* 6 *d.* the piece for weaving, and can weave a piece in a week by 16 hours a day work. I have a wee girl who never gets off the loom from day-light in the morning until 10 o'clock at night. She is only 13 years of age. She can earn 8 *d.* or 10 *d.* a day. The work is light 13^{00} lawns. On a 15^{00} lawn I could only make 1 *s.* a day. The youngsters could make more than I could on a 17^{00} lawn. I could make 1 *s.* 6 *d.* a day; it is the readiest strike there is for making money. The expenses of light, dressing, tallow, and winding of weft, we have to deduct out of our earnings; besides a day in going to the office with and bringing home on each web"

I visited and examined several double damask and single damask and diaper weavers. I found in one house four double damask looms, which cost one of them 40 *l.* the others 30 *l.* each; the weaver on the first set could earn 4 *s.* 3 *d.* a day, after deducting the expenses of winding weft, dressing and warping; on the second best set, 2 *s.* 9½ *d.* a day, after deducting the expenses of winding of weft, dressing and warping; on the third set, 2 *s.* 4 *d.*, after deducting the expense of winding weft, dressing and warping; on the fourth set, 2 *s.* 1½ *d.* a day, deducting the expense of winding, dressing and warping. It was also stated that, before the fall in 1837, the webs on which they now get 3 *s.* 7 *d.* a yard for the weaving they got 4 *s.* 4 *d.*; the loom on which they got 1 *s.* 3 *d.* a yard for the weaving, 1 *s.* 5½ *d.*; the loom on which they get 1 *s.* 6 *d.* a yard, 1 *s.* 8¼ *d.*, and it was also stated, that, before the fall, prices had been stationary for many years. The persons

sons who worked the looms were three fine young men, sons of the person who owned the house, and an apprentice; the ages of the persons employed were 17 to 28.

In a single-damask and diaper weaver's house I visited, and whom I examined, I found that on five looms he had employed in the house, not more than 4 *s.* 9 *d.* a week net profit was made on each; a young girl of 14 wove on one, a boy of 13 on another, an apprentice of 16 on the fourth, another lad of 16 on the third, and the owner of the house on the fifth. The weaver stated he could make 8 *s.* a loom on the average in 1836, before the fall in 1837. I give these two instances in respect to the earnings of damask and diaper weavers, as being the highest and lowest I met.

The plain linen weavers I found could earn on coarse sets of from 10^{0} to 14^{00}, 4 *s.* 4 *d.* a week, above all expenses, on from 14^{00} to 17^{00}, 6 *s.*; on from 17^{00} to 20^{00}, 7 *s.* 6 *d.*; on from 20^{00} to 23^{00}, 11 *s.* The profits of the weavers who make up webs in the brown market, I found it impossible accurately to ascertain, for such a period as would enable me to strike a fair average; however, all the evidence on this head goes to prove that they make less than those employed by manufacturers, and that their profits are most injuriously fluctuating.

Tanderagee.

In the neighbourhood of Tanderagee a large number of weavers still continue to work on their own account, and to make up goods for the brown markets. The system of manufacturers giving out work is not carried on so extensively as at Lurgan and its vicinity; it is, however, rapidly on the increase, and the prejudice of the weavers against working for employers is gradually on the decline. They now find that the earnings of those employed by manufacturers are higher and more regular, and self-interest is gradually breaking down the feeling of pride against taking webs from manufacturers, which the independence and freedom from restraint attendant on working on their account engendered.

Joseph Pedlow, a weaver of linens and diapers on his own account for the last 25 years, states: "For the last seven years I was not able to earn as much on my loom, buying the yarn and making up the cloth myself, as those weavers who were employed by manufacturers. The large manufacturers can get mill-spun yarn, which is easier wove by a third, whereas I had to make my cloth of hand-spun yarn, or it would not be bought; for those buyers who frequent the brown market would not buy from the weavers linens made of mill-spun yarn. The weavers who work for manufacturers will make 1 *s.* 8 *d.* a day, when I will not (working on my account) make perhaps 10 *d.* The weavers all, however, regret that the trade ever went into the hands of the large manufacturers, although they can earn more by working for them. Up to last May, for the last five years previous, taking one year with the other, and including the great fall in the trade during 1837, I was able to make, clear of all expenses, winding, dressing, and light, working on the average for 12 or 13 hours a day, 6 *s.* a week. The hundred of cloth I wove was from 13^{00} to 14^{00}. I think for the same time, on the same hundred of cloth, same length and breadth, a weaver employed by a manufacturer on mill-spun yarn, as good a workman as I am, and working as long, would have made 9 *s.* a week, clear and above all expense. I know that weavers who work for manufacturers about here, can now earn on the low hundreds (13^{00} and 14^{00}) 1 *s.* a day, clear of all expense. Even little slips of girls could weave linens of that number with the mill-spun yarn. From 15^{00} to 20^{00} they are able to make 1 *s.* 4 *d.* a day, clear of all expenses, at from 12 to 14 hours' work. I attribute the change from weavers working for themselves to working for manufacturers to the introduction of mill-spun yarn, and to the manufacturers being thereby enabled to give the weavers more than they can make working for themselves. The reason I did not turn to work for manufacturers was, I had a sort of pride in me, and, having a little farm, I did not wish to be subject to fines, if I had not my web in by a certain time. A fair weaver ought to be well able to finish a 15^{00} in a fortnight, and a young man that is handy would as soon weave a 15^{00} as a 20^{00}, and could do it in the same time; a 21^{00} and 22^{00} would take three weeks to weave. I am obliged

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to pay ready money for the yarn I buy. All the women who used to be spinning are now either winding warps for employers or weaving. Formerly a woman used never to weave; it would be looked on as a wonder. It is very difficult to get good hand-spun yarn; a great chance to get a good bunch now."

The demand for yarn spun by hand is limited and uncertain, being almost altogether confined to the weavers who work on their own account. The number of weavers who weave on their own account are continually fluctuating, though progressively on the decrease. The supply of hand-spun yarn is similar to the demand, limited and uncertain.

The weavers are too poor to purchase a supply of yarn from a spinner who spins yarn by machinery (mill-spun yarn, as it is called); the material for a single web is the most they are able to purchase; and as the mill-spinner would not dispose of his yarn in such small quantities, the weaver is obliged to look for yarn spun by hand, which is sold in the markets and fairs in small quantities, and of which he can buy as much or as little as suits his convenience. Mr. Wilson, a yarn-buyer and linen-dealer of Tanderagee, states, "That brown cloth in Tanderagee market is 3 *d.* a yard dearer than it was last winter, 1837 and 1838, and that hand-spun yarn, which is woven by the weavers who work on their own account, has become so dear that he could not reckon on buying any quantity of fine linens." He also states that the poor weavers who weave for themselves cannot buy more than one web, and that the difficulty of getting hand-spun yarn, and the travelling about looking for it, causes them to lose much time. The description of farmers who grew their own flax for their own account is gradually passing away, and it is a poorer and lower class which still clings to the old customs of the linen manufacture. The large farmer now finds it more profitable to devote all his attention to his farm, and if he grows flax he disposes of it at the mill, and the spinners have all turned weavers. The smaller farmers who have not sufficient land to enable them to derive a competent livelihood from it, and turn to weaving as an auxiliary, have been gradually subdividing, as far as they were able, their already too small farms amongst their families, until the landlords, alarmed at the extent to which this was carried on, have now turned their attention to the consolidation of their farms, and consequently this class will soon have to depend solely on their weaving; they will consequently be obliged to take work from employers. The only class who still weave on their own account, are those individuals who hold small farms of from 4 to 10 or 15 acres. I met but one weaver who held upwards of 20 acres of land, and continued to weave on his own account. The linen trade in the north enables landlords to consolidate farms, which cannot be done in the south without the risk of life and property. The linen trade gives the people something to fall back upon, and stands between them and absolute destitution.

The demand for hand-loom labour in the neighbourhood of Tanderagee is on the increase, and manufacturers are striving who will get most hands. Mr. Porter, moral agent to Lord Mandeville, states, "I am acquainted with the feeling and wants of the people from the situation I hold under Lord Mandeville; and I have never heard of any complaints or grievances expressed on the part of the hand-loom weavers against what are called the large manufacturers. I have known instances where small manufacturers have very heavily fined poor weavers for supposed or alleged damage done to their cloth." The looms in the neighbourhood of Tanderagee are in general bad and old, and not constructed on the new principles. Mr. James Montgomery wrote to me, stating the deficiency in the old looms, and said he had constructed a new loom on improved principles, which would tend much to lessen the labour of the weaver, and improve the quality of the cloth. I regret I was not informed of this when at Tanderagee, and that I did not see the loom to which he alludes. There has been a loan fund established at Tanderagee by Lord Mandeville for his tenants for some years, which is stated to have conferred much benefit on the weavers. There has also lately been established under the loan-fund board a general loan fund and a Mont de Piété at Tanderagee. Mr. Porter, on this head, states, "The poorer classes of weavers formerly, and do still, hire looms which are of a very inferior description, and for which they are charged by the person who hires the looms 10*s.* annually. The cost of a loom is 3*l.* I know one man who has, within the last 24 years, paid 12*l.* for the hire of a loom. Above 100 looms that were hired have been returned to their owners off Lord Mandeville's estate, by the facilities allowed for obtaining

obtaining a supply of looms of a better description by his own private loan fund. There are at present above 160 new looms procured by means of this loan fund, which within the last five years have been paid off, and are now the property of the weavers. The demand for hand-loom labour is considerably on the increase. Within the last eight months above 100 weavers have received 351*l.* in loans from the Mont de Piété loan fund at Tanderagee for the purpose of purchasing looms. During the same period, 160 weavers have received 535*l.* for the purpose of buying yarn to weave on their own account. These sums are in course of weekly repayments at the rate of 1*s.* per week in the pound. The Mont de Piété Loan Fund, finding that many weavers could not pay 3*s.* a week for a loan of 3*l.* to purchase a loom, have engaged four loom-makers, in order that every weaver may have the opportunity of obtaining a good loom of his own, extending the time of repayment to 60 weeks instead of 20, which, according to the rules, should have been the case, had money been lent in place of looms. From the applications already received for these looms, I have no doubt but from 300 to 400 looms will be issued in the next 12 months. I think the loan-fund system peculiarly adapted to better the condition of the weavers, and suited to their peculiar circumstances; it has here enabled them to procure good looms of their own without hire, and has, by the punctuality required in the repayments of the weekly instalments, given them habits of greater frugality and industry, and has been the means of enabling weavers to hold over webs for a better market, which otherwise their necessities would have compelled them to sacrifice. As a proof of how gladly the weavers availed themselves of the advantages held out by the loan fund to them, out of 1,685 borrowers above 1,000 are weavers: 650 loans have been paid off up to the 31st of last October, and amongst the most punctual of the repayments are the weavers." I gladly submit this evidence on the practical results of the loan fund at Tanderagee. After a sufficient period has elapsed to allow a fair judgment to be formed as to the permanent effects likely to result from the establishment of loan funds, the statistical account of their progress and effects in Ireland will be calculated to afford much information, available for the most useful purposes. The great danger to be feared in Ireland from loan funds, is the tendency of such establishments to mismanagement, and the difficulty of drawing the line between their powers of good and evil. The great evil of the Irish character is a proneness to throw itself on any fund sooner than its own industry, and any system calculated under any circumstances to hold out encouragement to this evil should be looked on as a most dangerous experiment, and be managed with the utmost caution. It is stated in the evidence I have quoted, as a proof of the good effects of the loan fund at Tanderagee, that 160 weavers have received within the last eight months 535*l.* for the purpose of buying yarn to weave on their own account. Now to any one who has given even the slightest consideration to the circumstances of the country and the present state of the linen trade in the United Kingdom, it must be apparent that the continuance of the system of weavers making up webs on their own account is neither advantageous nor practicable; I therefore cannot agree to the conclusions drawn as to the good results of the loan fund. Under this head I cannot withhold, however, my humble tribute of praise to the good intentions and active exertions of the founders and promoters of this fund.

From Tanderagee I proceeded to Armagh, but Mr. Muggeridge, who was associated with me in the inquiry in the north of Ireland, having previously arrived there, I did not examine any witnesses. Armagh market is frequented by the most wealthy and respectable class of weavers who, in the north of Ireland, weave on their own account; the cause and effect of this circumstance on the brown market trade is important. From Armagh I proceeded through Charlemount and Moy, making merely cursory inquiries on my route to Dungannon. At Moy I met an intelligent person, who appeared well acquainted with the linen trade. He stated that the fluctuations to which the brown market was subject, and the struggles of the weavers to continue to keep up the old system, and the daily increasing difficulty of procuring a steady supply of hand-spun yarn, has operated injuriously on the condition of the weavers, the linen trade, and also on the agriculture of the country. He however stated, that there was a most advantageous open in that district for the location of large manufacturers with sufficient capital, and that already one or two had established themselves near the town, with considerable advantage to themselves and the weavers.

When the railroad from Belfast to Armagh is opened, it will rapidly tend to extend

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extend and improve the linen trade, and the condition of the weavers in this part of the country, a supply of mill-spun yarn being the great desideratum. In passing through the country, and occasionally stopping at those houses where I perceived the chains of yarn drying, and the other symptoms of weaving affording employment, I did not find either complaint or any symptoms of distress. I could always discover a weaver's residence by the apparent want of proper management of the land about his cabin. The weavers took me for a manufacturer coming to establish an office for putting out work, and thought I was feeling my way as to the terms on which I could obtain hands; while under this impression, which at first I did not attempt to remove, I was highly amused at the exaggerated and flattering account they gave of their earnings. They thought I would be obliged to offer them more than they were making on their present system; however, when I congratulated them on their condition, according to their own showing, and stated how happy I was in being able to report so well of them, nothing could equal the change of their statements, or their dismay at what they had said.

Dungannon.

At Dungannon, county Tyrone, I found the linen trade had greatly declined, and that, while the old system had been passing away, the new mode of manufacture had not been proportionably introduced. A great number of the linen weavers had turned their attention to other pursuits. The appearance of this well-situated town and the neighbouring county is an exception to the general appearance of improvement I had met; it appears to be considerably retrograding; and I regret the short time I was there forced me to restrict my inquiries within narrow limits. Not more than 10 buyers now frequent the brown weekly market; yet this town was one of the first brown markets, and sold the finest cloth in that portion of the north of Ireland. The linens now sold are from 7^{00} to 10^{00}, 9^{00} the principal; there are 52 yards in the piece, 27 and 32 inches wide. The average price per yard, for 9^{00}, is 8 *d.* a yard; 34 *s.* 8 *d.* per piece. For a 9^{00} piece it takes 52 hanks of yarn, which would cost 4 ½ *d.* a hank, or 19 *s.* 6 *d.* for the 52 hanks, leaving 15 *s.* 2 *d.* for the weaving, winding, dressing, warping, and beaming. A weaver, by moderate work, can wind, warp, beam, boil the yarn, and weave the piece in a fortnight, or, if he works hard, in eight or nine days. Mr. Malony, a linen-buyer, who was bred to the trade, and used to give employment to 120 weavers, who sold him their cloth, states, "A good and industrious weaver, who buys his own yarn, and sells his own cloth, can earn from 1 *s.* 3 *d.* to 1 *s.* 6 *d.* a day."

From the difficulty of obtaining a regular supply of hand-spun yarn, as neither the farmers nor spinners find it a profitable production, and from the difficulty the weavers find at times in obtaining a sale for their cloth, the employment of the weaver is by no means constant; and I should think 1 *s.* a day a fair average of the amount of their earnings for the last three years, no from the 7^{00} to the 10^{09} linens. The buyers now find it more profitable to make their purchases at the offices of manufacturers in other parts of the country, where they can obtain a large supply of any one description of cloth, and a long credit.

From Dungannon I proceeded to Strabane, at one period the great yarn market of the counties Tyrone, Donegal, parts of Armagh, Derry, and Down, and the point to which the yarn produced in Fermanagh, Cavan, Monaghan, Leitrim, and even Sligo, was sent for sale. This trade is almost at an end, the introduction of mill-spun yarn having limited the market and the profits of hand-spun yarn.

Mr. Gwynne, connected with the trade for the last 30 years, states, "I have known in this market 1,000 webs offered for sale, and those webs belonged to 800 weavers. From 1830 the trade among the weavers, as manufacturers, began rapidly to decrease. The high price of provisions, the introduction of mill-spun yarn, and the decrease of the hand-spun yarn, on which the weavers wrought, both in quantity and quality, were among the most prominent causes of the decline. The weavers were forced either, in a great measure, to go out of the trade, or to turn to work for employers who had capital and the means of giving them a constant supply of the raw material. I think the weavers who work

work for manufacturers are better off than those who still continue to work on their own account, taking everything into consideration, and better off than the weavers working on their own account were six years ago. There is not more than one-tenth of the webs made up by weavers for the brown market that there used to be. There are about 600 weavers who weave on work given out by manufacturers within six miles round this town. I should think that, taking into account those weavers who work on their own account, and bring cloth to market, and those who weave at so much a yard for farmers' use, there are about 600 more. The decrease of hand-spun yarn in this market has been immense year after year; not 100th part of what it was. I look upon the introduction of mill-spun yarn as a great blessing, and as the only thing that has kept the trade we have with us. The Linen Board was our greatest curse. It attempted to interfere with the natural operation of the laws which must ever regulate the dealings between the employers and the employed; it did all it could to try and protect home hand-spun yarn; and the laws of the Board had the effect of prohibiting the introduction of foreign hand-spun yarn, which might have been most advantageously made up * * * *. I look upon it as impossible to keep up the manufacture of hand-spun yarn (on the old system) in this country; it is not possible that weavers manufacturing on a small scale, on their own account, could ever compete with large manufacturers. I feel assured that the earnings of fair weavers, for the last five years, working 14 hours a day, have been 6 *s.* a week above all expenses. I do not think the hand-loom weavers are worse off than the common labourers, as to their earnings; on the contrary, I think them better off, for they can get constant work at harvest and the other busy seasons. Hand-loom weavers are too few, at other times they are too many; the tendency is for the number of hand-loom weavers to exceed the demand for their labour."

I interrogated those men who were selling coarse webs of from 6^{00} to 8^{00} linens through the town on the market day. They told me the weavers who weave the cloth for them got 3 *d.* a yard, and that a weaver could easily make from four to five yards a day. They were indignant at my asking them if the weavers could make 1 *s.* a day, taking the average of the three last years, and stated that they could make more.

County Donegal.

The linen weaving of the county Donegal is chiefly confined, with few exceptions, to those who weave for farmers' use, or for sale in the country fairs and markets. These weavers have generally full employment at weaving from the 1st May to 1st January, with the remission of a month in harvest, and only half work for the remainder of the year; at full work they are only able to earn from 8 *d.* to 10 *d.* a day, clear of all expenses. The weavers who make up cloth on their own account, for the fairs and weekly common markets, are able to earn from 5 *s.* to 7 *s.* 6 *d.* a week; but their profits are very uncertain, and few weavers are now able to stand the fluctuations of the market, or have sufficient capital to provide the raw material. Samuel Williamson, a weaver of from 12^{00} to 14^{00} linens, states, "I weave on my own account; I buy the yarn in Letterkenny, make it into cloth, and sell it in the brown market to jobbers. It is all hand-spun yarn I use. I generally get for a 12^{00}, of 52 yards to the piece, 1 *s.* 1½ *d.* a yard. I just weave three yards in the day; I could weave four yards, but I have some little things to do about the house which takes me some time. The yarn for a 12^{00}, and the expenses of boiling, bleaching, stuff, light, tallow, dressing, and winding, cost 2 *l.* 4 *s.* I had, when I last counted, 14 *s.* 6 *d.* for the weaving, which left me about 3 ½ *d.* a yard. I always pay ready money for the yarn. What with cutting turf and planting potatoes, I do not weave for more than 10 months in each year. Most of the weavers about here work for themselves, the way I do; there are not one-third as many as there were 10 years ago; many are gone to America and Scotland."

The weavers who work for farmers in this country are worse paid than the same description of weavers in any other part of Ireland; this arises from the great and general poverty of the farmers in Donegal, and the almost total absence of a comfortable middle class. In no county in Ireland did I meet with such general poverty as in Donegal, and instances of the poverty and degradation to which human beings can be subjected, have come under my notice in

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parts of Donegal, that I am persuaded no parts of the world could exceed, if equal. The inhabitants of the mountains of Donegal are descended from the ancient tenants of the plains, who were driven into these fastnesses by the Scotch settlers. In no part of Ireland is the distinction between the original and colonizing races more strongly marked, especially at the points of contact. The population on the mountains is increasing far beyond the means of support to be derived from a soil for which nature has done very little, and agricultural skill absolutely nothing. It is truly painful to contemplate the future prospects of this people; but, as yet, they seem to be as happy in reality as they are miserable in appearance, and the rents demanded for their wretched holdings are regularly and cheerfully paid. In the neighbourhood of Stranolar some manufacturers have established themselves, and are enabled to make up linen cloth on as advantageous terms as in any other part of the north of Ireland. The independent class of weavers who formerly made up linen cloth on their own account, for the supply of the country markets, may be said to be extinct.

County Sligo.

From Donegal I proceeded to Sligo. Here I found merely the traces of a linen manufacture; the linen-hall, of considerable extent, was hired out as a general warehouse, and hardly a single web was presented for sale. On what were the linen market days, a few spinners still hawk hand-spun linen yarn through the streets, but both the quantity and quality of the yarn offered for sale is utterly insignificant. Mr. Roger O'Hara, seal-master and keeper of part of what was the linen-hall, states, "The linen-hall is now turned to other purposes; it belongs to the hotel-keeper. I am 18 years here: when I first came, there were from 400 to 500 webs sold here every week. There was also a linen market in Colloony (five miles from this), and 100 to 150 webs sold weekly; there is not one single web brought for sale there now. The description of linens sold at Colloony market were from 10^{00} to 12^{00}, and from 10^{00} to 11^{00} sold here. The number of webs sold here have been progressively falling off for the last 15 years; on last Saturday there was only one web offered for sale; this market is gone. There is no hand-spun yarn coming in worth speaking of. All the weavers who made up work on their own account have turned to other work. No manufacturers put out work amongst the weavers; all the cloth ever made up here, was made up by weavers on their own account for farmers' use. There are right good earnings for the weavers; 1 *s.* a day on 9^{00} linens, above all expenses. On linens of 8^{00} the weavers get, for weaving, 2*d.* a yard: a good young fellow would weave 8 yards in 14 hours; for 9^{00} the weaver gets $2\frac{1}{2}$ *d.* a yard; weaving seven or eight yards a fair average day's work on 9^{00} or 10^{00}; a good weaver puts out a web of 52 yards of a 10^{00}. in 10 days, and gets 3 *d.* a yard for the weaving of it. In country work, the weaver is supplied with dressing and tallow. The want of a demand for cloth in town markets prevents the hand-spun yarn from being produced; enough is now only made for home or farmers' use. The season for the weavers, who weave for farmers, only lasts for eight or nine months in the year."

The extinction of the linen trade in the county Sligo affords a decided proof of the correctness of what I have so often already stated, viz., that the linen trade in Ireland could not be preserved on the old system on which it was conducted. A number of small weavers, but one degree removed from paupers, living from hand to mouth, working on a dearer and inferior description of yarn, could not possibly compete with the concentrated capital and skill and the division of labour applied to the several processes of the linen manufacture since the introduction of mill-spun yarn in the other parts of the United Kingdom. Mills for the spinning of yarn have not been established, and the expense on the transit of mill-spun yarn has prevented linen manufacturers from giving out webs to weavers to be made up. The consequence has been, that the linen manufacture on the old system has died a natural death, and the new system, not being introduced in its stead, linen weaving, except for farmers' use, has become extinct. The small portion of linen now made up for the use of the peasantry continues to exist solely from the want of ready money amongst the people. The poor farmer finds it more convenient to grow a small bit of flax, and employ the otherwise unavailable labour of the female and younger portion of his family, on the several processes

cesses required for converting it into yarn or linen, than to go into the town and purchase shop cloth. The weaver, in many cases, is either a cottier on his ground, and works out, as they say, the rent with him, or is a member of his own family, who is paid in kind. This still further adds to conceal from the farmer the real value of the exchange he is giving for the linen cloth he is in want of, and still further obviates the difficulties he labours under from the want of ready money. Except what is necessary to pay the rent, money is seldom possessed by the poorer farmers; as a medium of exchange for the necessaries of life it is little used. In many instances the poorer farmers who are able only to provide a small quantity of yarn, not sufficient to make a whole piece, club together; and I have seen many webs on looms, that had two or three owners, and would have to be divided amongst them. The state of the linen trade in those districts of the west and south of Ireland where it had been established is not in general dissimilar from the state of the trade in the county of Sligo, and has been affected by similar causes. Linen weaving is chiefly confined to the making up webs for the use of the peasantry, except in a few districts, where the almost total absence of any employment for the great mass of the people has rendered hand-loom labour so cheap as to enable some webs of coarse cloth to be occasionally made up on the old system, so cheap as to afford a profit to the few jobbers who continue to frequent the linen markets. But this uncertain flickering of the expiring trade is day after day on the decline, and the poverty of the weavers is fast encroaching on and limiting their means of obtaining a supply of yarn, or standing against the fluctuations of the market. The quality of linens offered for sale is daily deteriorating, the looms of the weavers are in a bad state of repair, and of the worst construction, and in some districts (Dingle, in the county Kerry, for instance) the weavers use the hand in place of the fly shuttle.

It is obvious that this is an unnatural and unhealthy state of trade which cannot long continue to exist. The poverty of the districts where linen is still made for the brown linen markets, or for the country fairs or weekly general markets, while it renders labour cheap, prevents the weaver from procuring any good materials; he can only purchase the worst flax or the worst yarn; every year his fabrics are more and more deteriorated, and his remuneration for his labour diminished in the same proportion. This can only continue until the webs become all but worthless, and the operative reaches the starving point, when it will be impossible for him to procure the raw materials of manufacture. How long this injurious race against time will be continued, it is not possible to foretell; because in these districts the unfortunate weavers have nothing on which they can fall back. The land is subdivided into the most minute portions, and it is in many places hardly able to supply a sufficient quantity of potatoes for food. The labour market is so overstocked by a superabundant population, that if the loom were abandoned, no employment would be obtained in its stead. Even now the webs brought in for sale to the brown markets of Mayo and Kerry would scarcely find purchasers, were it not for the remoteness of these districts from the principal towns of Ireland, their want of intercourse with the capital, and the difficulty and delays of procuring goods from thence, owing to the imperfect means of carriage.

Embezzlement and Detention.

Under this head I have received considerable evidence. Almost all the manufacturers, from the highest to the lowest, that I have examined, concur in strongly setting forth the injurious effects of the embezzlement of yarn on the linen trade and on the morals of the weavers. The purloining of yarn is generally attributed to the winders and the members of the weaver's family; in most cases it is stated to be done without the knowledge of the weaver. On the old system, when the weavers used to weave on their own account, the selling or pawning of weft was always the readiest means of supplying the present necessities of the needy, or the means to which the members of a weaver's family resorted to procure a supply of tea, tobacco, or whiskey. Thus a vast number of hucksters' shops were called into existence in the weaving districts, and these discounted the drafts of weft in the debased and debasing currency of stimulants. Cops of weft were in many cases the weavers' currency, and the accommodating dealer asked no questions, for conscience sake. On the change of weavers

working on the property of others instead of their own, the difference was not always remembered; old habits were not to be overcome by nice distinctions; the tempting doors of the accommodating and unscrupulous huckster are still open for the weft; a few cops are not missed; and besides, there is the intention of replacing them before the work is finished.

I do not wish to excuse the system of embezzlement, but merely to account for it. "If there were no buyers, there would be no sellers," is an old saying, and the best means to prevent the embezzlement of yarn is to deter individuals from buying it. The present law on this head I conceive to be imperfect; it requires an identification of the yarn that is almost impossible to obtain. I should be extremely cautious in recommending for the consideration of the Commissioners any alteration in the law which would be calculated to diminish the safety of persons innocently accused, or likely to impose a vexatious system of checks; yet at the same time I respectfully submit, that the holders of boiled yarn, which alone manufacturers give out, ought to be made accountable for the when and the where, and from whom they received it; and that no person should be allowed to purchase or retail yarn without a licence so to do. I obtained a return of the cases tried under the head of embezzlement and detention of yarn at the petty sessions of Dromore, Dromara, Banbridge, and Lurgan for the last two years; these cases appear sufficiently numerous to give an ordinary bench of Irish magistrates enough of business. At the petty sessions of Banbridge, from 11th October 1836 to 4th October 1838, there were 548 cases tried for the detention of webs beyond due time, and 32 cases for the embezzlement of yarn; one firm alone, employing only 1,500 weavers, had 115 cases tried within the time I have mentioned for detention of yarn, and three cases for embezzlement of the web; in every instance they got convictions for double the value of the yarn in the case of detention, and treble in the case of embezzlement. On inquiring into the cause of one manufacturer being the plaintiff in such a disproportionate number of cases, I found that the manufacturer in question was in the habit of paying his weavers chiefly in goods, or on the truck system as it is called, and the operatives being constantly brought in his debt, were obliged to exchange or sell the goods they received for their wages at a price vastly below that which they were charged for them, in order to procure the necessaries of which they stood in need, and were induced to look for and take out web from other manufacturers who paid ready money; hence arose the number of cases tried at the petty sessions at the instance of the one manufacturer to whom I allude. A few weeks before I visited Banbridge, the firm in question had become bankrupt, which proceeded from the system they had adopted of paying their weavers, and the constant litigations to which they were exposed; for although they obtained convictions in every case for double the value, they were seldom able more than to get back their webs, owing to the poverty of their weavers, and then generally in an unfinished state, and after having suffered considerable loss by their detention. The next largest number of cases tried at the instance of a single manufacturer within the same period was 43; I found this manufacturer had also become bankrupt, and had also been in the habit of paying his weavers on the truck system. Though I have not found the truck system to prevail to the same extent in the linen that it does in the cotton trade, and although it is chiefly confined to small manufacturers who, in addition to their trade in linens, carry on the business of general retail shopkeepers, yet it nevertheless operated to a very considerable extent most injuriously on the condition of the weavers during the depression of the trade in 1837. Some of the largest manufacturers adopted the plan of paying their weavers with cloth; the poor weavers were glad to obtain employment on any conditions, and at a great sacrifice of time and value sold the cloth they earned by their weaving at any price they could obtain for it; a number of small linen jobbers, who had the command of a little capital, by taking advantage of the weavers' necessities, and by keeping over the cloth thus bought, on the chance of a rise in the market, on the revival of the trade in the beginning of 1838 made a very considerable profit, and have since been enabled to give out a considerable number of webs to be woven.

I cannot but direct the attention of the Commissioners to the injurious effects, both on the employer and operative, of the truck system, and the necessity for some attention to the law on this head, which would have the effect of putting a stop to this practice.

As a reply to the charge of embezzlement, the weavers assert that the yarn supplied by the manufacturer; is not always of sufficient count. This appears to be very improbable, though I am far from doubting that manufacturers sometimes supply yarn of a quality inferior to that required for the particular hundred of linen it is intended to produce. An error in quality may be made, but an error in quantity could not occur without a culpable remissness on the part of the weaver when receiving the yarn, and a criminal combination between the manufacturer, the spinner and the reeler, which is scarcely within the verge of possibility. As to the punishment of weavers for the detention of webs beyond due time, I know little alteration that could be made in the present law on this head. Detention of work by the weavers proceeds from causes over which the Legislature can exercise little direct control. It arises in Ireland from the temptation held out to the weavers to employ themselves at agricultural labour for hire at certain seasons of the year, from the possession of small portions of land by a large number of the weavers, and the obligations by which poor cottier tenants are bound to pay their rent in labour when so required by their landlords; to these causes may be added temptations held out to them for taking webs from different manufacturers, temptations induced in many instances by the operation of the truck system of payments, and the want of a habit of continuous industry. This deficiency was in a great measure caused by the bad habits of procrastination and yielding to temptation which the weavers formed while working on their own account. There is in some districts a custom among the manufacturers of attempting to levy a fine and stop the amount out of the wages of the weaver, by causing him to sign an agreement to abide by their or their putter-out's decision, without any reference to a magistrate. This is an endeavour to place a power in the hands of the manufacturer, which I need not say ought never to be allowed. The cause of the fine, if brought before the petty sessions, might be explained,—sickness, bad yarn; and the weaver might get further time, or be fined only some small sum. It is of the utmost importance that at least the stipendiary magistrates appointed in the linen weaving districts, should be persons acquainted with the details and technicalities of the trade, at the same time that they ought to have no interest in or connexion whatever with the manufacture. This would in a great measure put a stop to much of the vexatious arbitrations and litigations which at present act so injuriously on the trade.

Educational Condition.

As to the educational state of the linen weavers of Ireland, and the degree in which they appear anxious that their children should obtain a better education, and what are the sacrifices which they really make, or appear willing to make, for the improvement of their children, I have only to repeat what I have already stated as to the hand-loom weavers considered as a class. Their educational and intellectual condition does not appear to differ much from that of other classes of Irishmen in the same rank of life; it does not appear proportionately better, considering their improved pecuniary condition, as compared with the great mass of the labour population. Though the means of education now afforded to all classes of the children of the linen weavers has been considerably increased and improved, yet, from the circumstance of the present generation of weavers having been left totally destitute of the instruction appropriate to their circumstances and condition, any desire they have for imparting to their children the blessings of education, according to their comprehension of the term, is seldom sufficiently strong to cause them to forego any immediate advantage which the labour of their children may afford. The great obstacle to the education of the people was and is the low pecuniary condition of the great mass of the population. A people reduced to a state of continual struggle for the necessaries of life, cannot be expected to devote much time or attention to the cultivation of the mind. Education was not sought by the people, it could therefore only be attained from the external interference of a paternal government, or the benevolence of philanthropic individuals. Unfortunately, the direct interference of the Government was long delayed, and even when first offered was still longer partial and inefficient; while the benevolence of the wealthy was perverted by narrow and sectarian

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rian views, equally inconsistent with the enlarged views of that gospel purported to be inculcated, and the peculiar circumstances of society in Ireland. At the period when the pressure of population on the means of subsistence was less strong, the introduction of a general system of education was neglected; one party, while they claimed the sole right to be the dispensers of education, either refrained altogether from attempting to bestow it, or attached to it such conditions that the recipients for whom it was intended felt that they could not receive it without a violation of their moral and religious obligations; the other party was too poor to attempt a system of useful education, and perhaps too ignorant to see the want of it. Thus the Roman-catholics were driven to an imperfect education in the hedge schools from their destitution.

When a more liberal system of general education was recently introduced by the establishment of the National Board, the poverty of the population of Ireland had produced that apathy and recklessness which must arise from present misery and uncertain prospects. The Board had no machinery constructed to their hand by which they could act, except after the lapse of considerable time, on the inert mass of the people; and those from whom, in other countries, they might reasonably have expected aid, the great majority of the clergy and gentry, some, no doubt, acting from conscientious motives, others from the influence of pride, passion, and party spirit, opposed the Commissioners to the utmost of their power before they gave them a fair trial. Under these circumstances, it is not surprising that I have not at the present found very striking symptoms of improvement in the education of the children of the linen weavers: the wonder is that I have found any.

COTTON.

Cotton Trade.

The introduction of the cotton trade into Ireland has been attributed to the exertions of Mr. Robert Joy and Mr. Thomas M'Cabe, so lately as the year 1785. In a memoir of the former gentleman's life it is stated, "So early as the year 1777, on a tour through the north of Ireland, the late Robert Joy conceived the scheme of introducing into this then desponding kingdom the more intricate branches of the cotton manufacture, which had proved unfailing sources of industry and opulence to the sister country." To enter into a minute detail of the rise and progress of the cotton trade would not serve any useful purpose, on account of the paucity and inaccuracy of the documents on which I should have to rely. I have already treated of the injurious effects of the protecting duties on the cotton trade, and stated, that all the efforts used to promote the manufacture, previous to the present century, were abortive. The average importation of cotton-wool and yarn, for the three years previous to 1799, was, cotton-wool, 10,983 cwts., cotton-yarn, 460,013 lbs. The average of the three years ending the 5th of January 1807 was, cotton-wool, 17,782 cwts., cotton-yarn, 1,223,081 lbs.; on the 5th of January 1810, cotton-wool, 32,257 cwts., cotton-yarn, 1,057,115 lbs. For the year ending the 5th of January 1811 there were imported into Belfast 14,320 bags of cotton-wool, of which were exported 3,007, leaving, for home consumption, 11,313 bags, which, at 20 *l.* per bag, comes to 226,260 *l.* The cotton-wool imported into Ireland from Great Britain, in 1813, amounted to 1,319,920 lbs.; from foreign ports, 2,058,224 lbs. Total number of pounds of cotton-wool imported into Ireland, in 1813, 3,378,144; cotton-yarn imported from Great Britain into Ireland, in 1813, 1,684,828 lbs. The cotton-wool imported into Ireland in 1817, from Great Britain, was 971,922 lbs.; from foreign ports, 1,500,632. Total number of pounds of cotton-wool imported into Ireland, in 1817, 2,472,554; cotton-yarn imported into Ireland from Great Britain, in 1817, 813,875. The cotton-wool imported into Ireland in 1821, from Great Britain, was 1,627,394 lbs.; from foreign ports, 2,339,969 lbs. Total number of pounds of cotton-wool imported into Ireland, in 1821, 3,967,363; cotton-yarn imported into Ireland from Great Britain, in 1821, 2,336,206. The cotton-wool imported into Ireland from Great Britain, in 1825, 2,112,774 lbs.; from foreign ports, 1,953,156 lbs. Total number of pounds of cotton-wool imported into Ireland, in 1825, 4,065,930; cotton-yarn imported into Ireland from Great Britain, in 1825, 1,953,156.

The

Weavers of Ireland. Cotton Trade. Report of C. G. Otway, Esq.

The cotton manufacture in Ireland is now almost altogether confined to the county Antrim, where it was investigated by Mr. Muggeridge. In the early part of the present century the cotton trade extended itself through several parts of Ireland, and was carried on to a considerable extent in Dublin, Drogheda, Cullen, Stratford, Mountmellick, Limerick, and Bandon. Belfast, however, was not only the place in which it was first introduced, but the centre to which capital and skill were attracted; and, as the trade increased at Belfast, Randalstown, and Coleraine, it declined in the other parts of the kingdom where it had been introduced. The position of Belfast, as regarded the great cotton weaving districts of Scotland and the north of England, and its increasing trade, as the Liverpool of Ireland, held out advantages for the importation of the material, and the introduction of the improved machinery which was being applied to its manufacture in England and Scotland, possessed in no other part of Ireland. The small manufacturers scattered over the other parts of the kingdom were precluded from contending with the concentrated capital and skill which the local advantages of Belfast attracted towards it; consequently the trade, while it has rapidly extended in the county Antrim, and portions of the county Down, adjacent to Belfast, has generally declined, and, for all practical purposes, may be almost considered as extinct in the other parts of Ireland, although, within a few years past, large cotton manufactories have been established at Clonmel, Portlaw, and Limerick, and carried on with considerable success. At Bangor, Grey Abbey, and Newtown Ards, in the county Down, I found the cotton trade carried on to a very considerable extent.

I found that the weavers of 24^{00} jaconets, which was the principal description of cloth woven there, and the most remunerative, received 5 *s.* 8 *d.* for weaving and winding a piece of 12 yards long. I found that two pieces could be woven in the week by a good and industrious weaver, although three pieces in a fortnight was the average number woven, and that the period the weavers have been out of employment for the last three years, was two months per year, or six months in all. The amount of deduction to be made for light, winding, dressing, and tallow on a single loom amounted to 2*s.* There are 430 weavers employed in and around the immediate vicinity of Bangor. Two looms are the average number employed in each house. The female portion of the children of the weavers I did not find employed at weaving, as the flowering of muslin has been introduced in this district. In the half barony of Ards there are not less than 5,000 young girls employed at this description of work, and they are able to earn from 2*s.* 6*d.* to 4 *s.* 6*d.* a week each. In every house you find almost every girl in it employed on her tambour or sewing frame; and a stranger cannot but be struck at the dressy appearance of the young females. I regret to say much of their earnings goes for the adornment of their persons in a manner not at all suitable to their situation in life.

The educational state of the juvenile population in this district is lamentably low. The early age at which the female portion of the children are put to the flowering of muslins prevents attention being paid to their education. The want of education, added to the temptations to which they are exposed from a too early command of money, leads them to an injurious gratification of their vanity. Although I found considerable exertions made on the part of the clergy of all denominations to impart both weekly and Sunday-school education to the youth of the parish, yet the educational state of the youthful population of the vicinity of Bangor appeared lower than in any other portion of the county Down, Kilkeel excepted. Out of the 430 weavers, I found only 30 holding even a small patch of land, and the weavers do not to the same extent as in the other parts of the north, or even of the county Down, work as agricultural labourers. To these facts I attribute the superior agricultural culture of the parish of Bangor. Here there is a class of labourers especially trained to agricultural work; and the system of culture adopted in a great measure prevents agricultural labour from being only occasionally required. I do not mean to say that this improved system is carried to the extent it might be; I only speak of its excellence comparatively with the other portions of Ireland.

In the district of Grey Abbey I found it stated that industrious cotton weavers had been able to earn for the last three years from 7 *s.* to 8 *s.* a week, and that 1 *s.* 9 *d.* a week was to be deducted for winding, dressing, and light, wear of loom, brushes, and heddles. On 15^{00} 35-inch width, the lowest description of

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work given out, they received for the weaving 2 *s.* 3 *d.* a piece. They could only make 2 or 2½ pieces in the week by fair work. For 20^{00} jaconets the weavers received 3 *s.* the piece of 12 yards for the weaving; and they could make 2½ pieces in the week. There are from 500 to 600 looms employed in the immediate vicinity of Grey Abbey, and more than one-half of the weavers are either holders of small portions of land or cottiers who are obliged to pay their rent in agricultural labour. From this circumstance follow the detention and ill-performance of their work as weavers; and I found that the fines of the manufacturers averaged from 3 to 4 per cent. on the wages paid. The embezzlement of weft was stated to be carried on to a considerable extent, and to be productive of the most injurious consequences. The detention of webs beyond due time by the weavers, results in a great measure from the prevalence of embezzlement. When the weaver or winder or a member of the weaver's family embezzles the weft, if the employer does not give out more, the weaver must wait until he can buy additional weft before he can finish the piece. The detention of the webs and embezzlement of yarn are carried on to a greater extent, I am led to believe, in the cotton than in any of the other divisions of the manufactures on which hand-loom labour is employed. But as I am only treating of the isolated portions of the cotton trade which I met, and as I feel assured that the cotton districts of the county Antrim, afford the best and almost only field for the full investigation of this subject, and as the examination of them devolved on Mr. Muggeridge, I shall only refer the Commissioners to the remarks I have made respecting embezzlement in my report on the linen trade, which apply with equal, if not greater, force to the cotton trade.

After leaving the north of Ireland, the first place affording an opportunity for investigation respecting the cotton trade, was Limerick. I there found that an attempt had been made to revive the cotton trade, which had been extinct for the last 15 years, by the establishment of an extensive shawl and embroidery manufactory, under an intelligent Scotch manufacturer, Mr. A. Buchanan. He had previously carried on the trade at Glasgow to a considerable extent, and as his evidence appears very important, I shall give it at full length.

He says, " I have been connected with this branch of trade in Limerick two years and 9 months; I had been for 14 years before that extensively connected with every description of silk and cotton weaving, and the embroidery of muslins and lace. The firm to which I belonged had agents in Belfast, and the low rate at which hand-loom and embroidery labour could be obtained there induced me to turn my attention to the south of Ireland, where the labour market was still lower, and where neither hand-loom labour nor embroidery was to any extent in operation. I fixed on Limerick, because the population was poorer and more numerous than that of any other town in the south of Ireland. Previous to my settling here there were few, if any, cotton goods, manufactured here, and those of the coarsest description. Finding the weavers themselves, as well as their looms and materials, totally unfit to weave any but the very coarsest work, I determined to establish a factory, where I could have looms suited to my own trade, and engaged boys as indentured apprentices to work the looms. I brought over from Glasgow and Paisley a number of the best shawl weavers I could procure to teach the apprentices shawl-weaving upon the most modern and improved principles; and also mechanics to make the looms and the machinery connected with them. The apprentices have thus been taught every thing connected with weaving, from the most simple to the most complicated process. I only employ one weaver (as a drill) who had been previously employed here. Among the boys I took as apprentices I found a great aptitude in learning the trade, but they are very unruly. It would be impossible to say the exact time that the boys took to learn their trade; it varied, according to their abilities, from three months to a year; that is, to weave on the lowest and easiest goods. The shawl-weaving is the most intricate of all weaving, and the boys may be said at all times and for years to be still learning. The boys I took were indentured for five years, at the rate of 2 *s.*, 2 *s.* 6 *d.*, 3 *s.*, 3 *s.* 6 *d.* and 4 *s.* a week for first, second, third, fourth and fifth years respectively. In addition to which, and as an inducement and reward for attention and industry, we gave a premium for all work done above a certain quantity, fixed according to his abilities on each boy, and this premium very frequently amounts to more than their stipulated weekly wages. The hours of work are, in summer, from half

half past six in the morning to eight at night, giving an hour and a half for breakfast and dinner; the hours in winter are from eight in the morning to five in the evening.

"Our intention is, to supply our present apprentices, when out of their time, with looms in their own houses, should they so desire, and in their place to take fresh apprentices in the factory. We employ 200 boys as weavers and draw-boys; they average from 14 to 16 years of age. We employ about 20 boys and girls besides, as winders, at 3*s.* to 5*s.* a week. We neither give or take a fee. We advance from 5*s.* to 20*s.* for the purpose of clothing; this advance, though in our power to take back, we seldom do, and when it is done, it is stopped at the rate of 1*d.* to 3*d.* a week.

"The weaving trade in this country being hitherto in such a low state, there is a great reluctance on the part of respectable persons to bind their children to it.

"Some of the best weavers I have are boys who were taken almost naked out of the streets. The great difficulty as regards the people, has been to create a spirit of industry amongst them: the great expenses of teaching, and the management of the concern, and the quantity of useless goods which were made for a long time, until the boys acquired some knowledge, militated, to a considerable extent, against the profits of our establishment; and it is now only, after three years existence, that it is beginning to pay.

"When we first came over here, we did not intend to make shawls, but plain goods, made at present by power-looms in England and Scotland, thinking that the cheapness of the labour market here would allow us to compete with machinery. We found we could not do so, because the boys were unable to bring forward the quantity. I then went from one thing to another, until I determined to try the best fabric that could be made, which was the shawls. After a great deal of loss and outlay of capital, I have now a prospect of succeeding. We get our raw material from Manchester, by the Shannon and canal, and we dispose of our goods in the adjoining counties. The only difficulty we have now to contend with, is the want of a ready market. The buyers here prefer going to Scotland, where they think they can get a greater variety of goods; the rates of wages are very low, but the want of industry is the great cause of this. The support and encouragement of this and other similar factories would be the greatest source from which to hope for the amelioration of the condition of this country.

"My opinion still is, that if I had very extensive capital, I could not employ it better than in the establishment of manufactories in the south of Ireland. There is more water-power totally lost on the Shannon, which might be employed for manufacturing purposes, within six miles of Limerick, than the whole steam-power of Manchester and Glasgow, for purposes connected with manufactures. A person with a sufficient capital could, by getting the raw material, spin it, weave it, and print it so successfully as to compete with any part of the world.

"We employ, besides those at the shawl-weaving, 800 persons in embroidering lace and muslin, all done by apprentice girls, bound for five and seven years, who are earning from 2*s.* to 7*s.* a week: three-fourths of these could not put a thread in a needle when they came here.

"With the exception of those apprentices and weavers employed in the factory, there are not more than 30 cotton-weavers employed in Limerick; they get 6*s.* 6*d.* for the weaving of a 10^{00} piece of 62 yards long and one yard wide, and it was stated that not one weaver in 10 could weave a piece in a week. Out of the 6*s.* 6*d.* the weavers are obliged to procure dressing, tallow, and light, and to wind the weft, for which 2*s.* should be deducted. The weavers are in a very distressed condition, and continually obliged to appeal to the benevolence of the public. In 1831 considerable distress existed amongst the hand-loom weavers at Limerick, and large sums were collected for their relief. The money so collected was principally expended in enabling them to emigrate, and those who could not obtain work as job-weavers for farmers' use in the country, or procure other descriptions of employment, left the country; and the class of weavers who remained in Limerick are, generally speaking, aged or infirm persons, who were not fit to emigrate, or to look for, or obtain other employment."

Weavers of Ireland.
Cotton Trade.

Report of
C. G. Otway, Esq.

Bandon.

The cotton-trade at Bandon is almost extinct, and the few weavers who continue to weave cotton are hardly able to eke out the most miserable means of subsistence. The numbers are rapidly on the decrease; Mr. James Scott, woollen manufacturer, comber, and spinner, states—

"I have been carrying on the cotton business for the last 15 years; the failure of that branch of the manufacture, the corduroy, led me to give it up. We were completely undersold by England, where the power-looms swept away our trade in three or four years. I also think the corduroys made in England were of a better description. In the year 1825 I employed between 200 and 300 cotton weavers, most of them on corduroys, some on calicoes. The weavers were then able to earn from 10*s.* to 12*s.* a week for weaving corduroys. The cotton weavers could not earn more than from 9*s.* to 11*s.* a week. The trade flourished up to 1829. There were at that time from 1,500 to 2,000 cotton weavers employed in Bandon and its vicinity. After the year 1829 I found that we could not compete with the English goods that were sent into the market. This town was then the seat of the corduroy manufacture for the south of Ireland; we might say, for all Ireland. When we found we could not compete with the English goods, we reduced our wages to what enabled the weaver to earn from 6*s.* to 7*s.* a week. We found that even with this reduction of wages we could not compete with the English merchants, who sent corduroys into Cork, Bandon, and Dublin. When we found we could not carry on the trade with a fair profit to ourselves or the weavers, we gave it up. Those that still carried on the trade, reduced the wages so that the weavers could only earn 3*s.* or 4*s.* a week gross wages. From what I know of the trade, I think there are not more than 150 cotton weavers, both on cord and calico, now employed, and we think 3*s.* 6*d.* the very outside of what weavers can earn at 14 to 15 hours work. They have been generally employed for about 10 months in each year for the last five years. Weavers, owing to the great reduction of their wages have gone off their work. The young have emigrated to England, and only the old and very poor, who were obliged to stay, remain behind. The weavers are not rearing their children to the business, except in a few instances. By this means the number of weavers is in proportion to the demand for their labour, although the wages have not risen; they continue at the minimum, A weaver, on one loom, could not possibly earn what would support a family, or even himself. All the weavers that could go to or get labouring work have gone, those who remain are mostly old and feeble; their wives and children manage to earn or beg something, which makes up a miserable support."

Nothing can equal the distress of the poor cotton weavers of Bandon. I never witnessed greater misery than in their cabins and mode of living; few, however, remain at the trade, except old or infirm persons, and a few young boys, whom the poor parents try to keep at the loom, in order to preserve them from absolute destitution. I did not meet what I could call an able-bodied individual on a cotton loom. The moment the young weavers are able to turn to anything else, they quit the loom, and, if they cannot obtain labouring work, quit that part of the country, and look for employment elsewhere, or enlist. Bandon is one of the best depôts for obtaining recruits in the south of Ireland.

The description of cotton cloth woven at Bandon, corduroys and check, is that kind of manufacture to which power looms have been most successfully applied; and I rejoice to say, that the competition has not been dubious, but so successful as to render it impossible for hand-loom labour to compete with it. The manufacturers are not even able to afford to pay what will supply the minimum of the most wretched means of subsistence to the able-bodied cotton hand-loom weavers.

Clonmel.

At Clonmel I visited Messrs. Malcolmson's hand-loom weaving factory, and examined Mr. Robert Malcolmson. The hand-loom factory I found in good order; but the rooms or lofts in which the weavers work are so low as, in my, opinion,

opinion, to endanger the health of the operatives. The building appears to have been an old corn store, which it was found convenient to turn to its present purpose. No employer ought to be permitted to collect a number of operatives in a place so confined and devoid of proper means of ventilation as to endanger the health of his work-poople.

Mr. Robert Malcolmson, of the firm of Malcolmson & Brothers, cotton manufacturers and general merchants, of Clonmel, states, "I employ 176 hand-looms on plain cottons, on 10 hundreds reeds, 27, 31, and 36 inches width. We are always ready to give full employment to this number of looms whenever we can get hands; sometimes we can get more hands than we want; at other times not so many. We have now 14 looms idle. All our looms are worked by girls. There are but two males in the establishment, the head-man and the assistant. The ages of the girls vary from 13 to 30; the usual age is from 16 to 18. We taught all these people ourselves; they never saw a loom before they came here. We, at first, paid so much per week to each new hand (from 1*s.* 6*d.* to 2*s.* a week); this was 12 years ago. We found, when we gave so much per week, they did not give their attention to learn the trade. We then established the rule of allowing them to learn it at their own expense, and paid nothing, until they had earned it. We find the principle of paying the weavers according to their work beneficial both to the weavers and ourselves. On the first piece we never make any abatement, we consider it only a learner's piece. The average time to learn to weave the first piece is from a fortnight to three weeks, and they will on the average weave a piece of 40 yards in the first fortnight, a 10 hundred reed, 18 beers, warp and weft, for which we pay 1*s.* 6*d.* For 27-inch width, 1*s.* 9*d.*; 31-inch width, 2*s.*; for 36-inch we net, we find everything. The prices are net for everything except fines for bad work and irregular attendance. The fines do not, upon an average, amount to 2*d.* a week. Irregularity of attendance and want of a constancy at work are the great evils we have to contend against. We employ at our factory, near Waterford, 360 power-looms, on nearly the same description of cotton. We carry on our hand-loom factory in order to consume part of the extra yarn our cotton-mill near Waterford produces.

"I cannot answer the question as to how far we are able with our hand-looms to compete with the power; if we had the yarn to purchase I do not think we could compete with the power looms. The cloth made here goes back to our factory. We send some of our goods to England; the remainder are sold in Ireland.

"A girl, attentive to her work, on an average, can earn 3*s.* or 3*s.* 6*d.* a week, and that after the first six months working. We were some considerable time before we got filled, not until 1828, though we set up in 1826. Since that we have not found so great a difficulty, though at times we could not get more than one-half of our looms filled. We give our hands constant work. Our power-loom weavers earn the most, but I cannot tell the proportion.

"They have some looms after our pattern at the penitentiary. Our hours of work in the winter are from seven in the morning until eight in the evening. Forty-five minutes for breakfast at nine o'clock, and one hour for dinner at two o'clock. Summer hours are from six in the morning until seven in the evening.

"The yarn comes up here from the factory in chains, and ready for the loom; the weft also is wound. The weavers get 3*s.* 6*d.* per week. We had our hand-loom factory and our girls trained before we set up power-looms. We originally brought our yarn from England, but it is now supplied to us from our factory at Portlaw.

WOOLLEN TRADE.

I HAVE already stated that the woollen manufacture of Ireland, from the negligence and extravagance of the proprietors, the want of an extensive home market, arising from the poverty of the peasantry, and the absence of a respectable middle class, almost expired before the protecting duties were withdrawn in 1823; and that it is only now beginning to revive and advance towards a healthy condition.

Weavers of Ireland. Woollen Trade. — Report of C. G. Otway, Esq.

In my review of the history of the linen trade I have given an account of the measure adopted in 1698 to discourage the woollen and promote the linen trade of Ireland. From the want of a home market the Irish manufacturers were forced to rely on their foreign trade; but here they came into competition with the English merchants, and aroused the spirit of commercial jealousy. The Act of William, prohibiting the export of Irish wool and woollens, destroyed the woollen manufactures, simply because they depended almost solely on foreign sale for their support.

Subsequently, the protecting duties granted to the Irish woollen manufactures, and the tax placed on the import of English cloth, tended to the deterioration of the Irish article. The manufacturer, thinking he had a monopoly of the home market, and the incentive to competition in the foreign market being taken away, became careless of his workmanship; and the quality of the cloth became so bad, that those who could afford to wear good and fine cloth would not purchase it, and preferred buying English cloth at double the price. Thus the Irish woollen manufacture was too expensive for the great bulk of the people, who used the freizes, which they wrought themselves; and it was of too inferior a quality to be used by the gentry.

The supply of the army and militia was almost the only demand left the Irish woollen manufacturers; and this was monopolized by one or two large houses that had Court or Parliamentary interest. This monopoly tended still further to encourage negligence of manufacture. The manufacturer looked upon his contract with the Government as a vested right, and became totally careless of the description of cloth he supplied. Nothing could equal the shameful jobbing carried on in the clothing department. The country was made to pay an enormous price for the worst description of cloth; and the health and comfort of the army and militia, &c. &c., were endangered, under pretence of giving encouragement to Irish manufactures. One of the Government contractors failed in 1810 from gross negligence and extravagance, induced by the feeling of security which his contract gave him.

The failure of the manufacturer to whom I have alluded was followed by the bankruptcy of almost the entire woollen trade of Dublin. The credit of nearly all the woollen manufacturers in Ireland was so affected, that the banks throughout the country refused to discount their bills, and in consequence the crash was general.

After the panic consequent on these failures had subsided, a few intelligent manufacturers embarked considerable capital in the trade, and commenced the attempt to raise the character of the Irish woollen manufacturers. Factories on an extensive scale, and calculated to produce the finest fabrics, were established at Celbridge by Messrs. Atkinson & Co., and afterwards conducted by Mr. Haughton, and at Kilmainham and Rathfarnham by Messrs. Willans. In the Appendix to the Fourth Report of the Commissioners appointed to inquire into the Revenue in 1822, it is stated, in a paper handed in by Mr. Haughton, that there existed in and about Dublin at that time 45 manufacturers, having 92 billies, giving employment to 2,885 work-people, on whom depended for support 7,386 individuals, manufacturing 29,312 pieces of cloth of various qualities, valued at 336,380 *l.*, and that the capital invested in buildings and machinery was 195,900 *l.* Mr. William Willans, in reference to this statement, in a letter to the Railway Commissioners last May, states: "I think the quantity and value of the articles manufactured at the period referred to were estimated too high; and it appears to me that the estimate had respect to what the number of billies then engaged could produce if fully employed, rather than to the amount which they actually did produce. I am therefore inclined to suppose that one-fourth less would be a nearer approximation to the fact; and in comparing the quantity and value of the goods now made, a reduction of 20 per cent. on the value as reduced, one-fourth would give the amount of the article then manufactured, in present value, to be 201,828 *l.* There are now 36 billies employed within the same district, and the value of the articles now manufactured may be about 90,000 *l.*, certainly not 100,000 *l.* The manufacture has fallen off one-half." In the Appendix to the Report I allude to, it is also stated that in the districts of Cork, Kilkenny, Monté, and Carrick-on-Suir, there are 3,184 persons engaged in the woollen manufactures, having 9,876 depending on them, and 19,322 pieces manufactured,

manufactured, value 199,100 *l.*, and capital invested in buildings and machinery 166,700 *l.* On this return Mr. Willans in his letter remarks: "This return I think a good deal over-rated, both as to the number of persons employed, and as to the quantity and value of the article produced. At the present time I am informed that in all those districts together they do not manufacture to the extent of 20,000 *l.* In the same paper the flannel trade of Wicklow and Wexford is estimated at 3,000 persons engaged, 9,000 dependants, 7,800 pieces manufactured, and their value 54,600 *l.* As this trade was conducted by persons who made the manufacture ancillary to other pursuits, such as farming, labour, &c. &c., this circumstance may account for the large number of individuals mentioned in the return as employed. I think, however, that in this case both individuals employed and amount of products are estimated too high. Be that as it may, the trade is now almost extinct, as, from the best information I can procure, it does not at present produce 500 *l.* per annum."

The manufacture of woollen cloth is confined to the city and vicinity of Dublin, and is principally conducted by a few firms, who carry on in their own establishments the several processes necessary for converting the raw material into cloth. Not only is cloth of the highest and best quality now made in Dublin, but the entire management of the manufacture is carried on in an improved manner, and in a way likely to ensure the increase and stability of the manufacture. Let the extent of the woollen manufacture have been what it may, let it have been established when it may, I consider it now only in its infancy, and for the first time containing the germs of life within itself. I augur more favourably of the woollen manufacture of Ireland from the single factory of Mr. Willans, from the description of cloth he is making, and from the competition he is able to stand against in the largest cloth markets of the United Kingdom, than if I had found 45 manufacturers having the 92 billies, and manufacturing 29,312 pieces of cloth, valued at 336,380 *l.*, as stated to have been the case previous to 1822, in the immediate vicinity of Dublin. There are not more than 250 woollen weavers employed in Dublin and its vicinity, and these are generally kept idle for want of work for one-third of each year. The average earnings of the woollen weavers for the last three years amount to from 8*s.* to 10*s.* a week, making allowances for the time they are kept idle, and the fines and deductions to which they are subject. The periods of idleness, which are very frequent, act most injuriously on the woollen weavers; if they had full employment, the industrious portion of them would, on the present rate of wages, earn from 15*s* to 18*s.* a week on each loom, clear of all expenses. It was stated in evidence that the woollen weavers earning from 10*s.* to 15*s.* a week, are worse off than other weavers earning only 7*s.* or 8*s.* a week, from their bad management, improvidence, and intemperance; that if they were kept working the whole year round except one week, they would be starving that week. Mr. Nicholas Hunt, foreman to Mr. Moore, woollen manufacturer, Miltown, states: "Mr. Moore employs 30 hand-loom woollen weavers, 16 of these work out, the others in a room in the factory. We are going to make an alteration to get all inside; we prefer having the men employed in a factory; it prevents theft; there is not, however, much theft; nor have we much cause to find fault on this head. With some few exceptions, the weavers are hard-working poor creatures when they can get work to do. For the last three years our men have been kept waiting for warps, on an average, 10 weeks in each year. The average earnings per week, including the time they are kept idle, for the year 1836, was 13*s.* 7 $\frac{3}{4}$*d.*; in 1837, 11*s.* 6*d.* per week. I cannot judge of this year, as at the beginning of it we were moving from one factory to another. We were not doing so much in 1837, which accounts for the decreased earnings of the men. If the men had constant employment they could average from 15*s.* to 18*s.* per week, and they should work 14 hours a day to make this. There is no scarcity of hand-loom weavers; if I was to say I wanted five or six weavers, I would have 20 or 30 looking for work. We make no deductions in the wages of the weavers, we supply them with everything necessary to weave the piece; loom, &c. We do not give the number of looms I have mentioned constant employment; a less number would do all the work we have, but we keep more in order to keep up our number of weavers, in case of wanting them, should an increased demand take place. The men work better when they are more dependent on their employers; if they had not to wait for turns, the master could get no satisfaction with them. We generally discharge in place of making stoppages for bad work.

Weavers of Ireland. Woollen Trade. — Report of C. G. Otway, Esq.

I attribute the distress and falling off of the trade (in a great measure) to the constant tendency amongst the men when the trade was good to combine, strike, and turn on their masters. The trade is so low now, and the employment so precarious, that the weavers cannot act so now. The results I saw from strikes and combinations were, the men reduced to starvation, and the employers disgusted with the business, which prevented them from investing capital in it when trade was good. There was no trade so subject to combinations, until they in a great measure drove it away, as the woollen. I think there is a great disproportion in the number of hand-loom weavers in Dublin and its vicinity to the demand for their labour. There is no skill required in plain woollen weaving; a boy of 16 years of age would learn to weave in a month or six weeks as well as any adult. If we were to take a boy and put him to work, who had not served his time, the men would not work with him, and would all walk out of the gate."

William Willans, esq., woollen manufacturer and merchant, states: "Our firm has been connected with the manufacture of woollen cloth in Dublin since 1812. In 1811 we built the factory called the Hibernian Mills, situated at Kilmainham. We were induced to commence this undertaking from the high duties on many articles of English manufacture, which we, in common with others, then imported for sale. On some goods these duties were so high as 25 per cent.; but we found from experience that the entire of these high duties were not available as a source of profit. The formation of the establishment we had just completed was attended with greater outlay than a similar one would have cost in England; the buildings were most expensive, and the machinery imported, fitted up, and kept in repair, at greater cost than they would have been there; such an establishment, together with the high price of coal, was also attended with greater cost. Besides these disadvantages, we had to import our principal overlookers, and generally our best workmen, neither of whom were willing to leave England and reside in Ireland, unless they were insured larger wages than they then enjoyed, and a prospect of constant employment. These we could promise; because the ordinary wages paid in Dublin were more than were paid in Yorkshire. The advantages of high wages and constant employment were sufficient to induce workmen to come over, and we never found any difficulty in procuring them. However, the unavoidable expenses prevented our receiving much advantage from the existing duties.

From the commencement of our factory in 1812 to the withdrawal of the protecting duties, collision or disputes with our workmen, that is, to such an extent as to create embarrassment or much loss, were of rare occurrence. We had occasional differences, but these were easily accommodated, either by moderate concessions, or firm resistance.

From 1821 to 1825 (the latter being the year in which the panic of November and December occurred in England) the trade was good, and all the manufacturers fully employed. The protecting duties ceased in 1823; but it is remarkable that their withdrawal was hardly felt, if at all, until the spring of 1826. This may be accounted for, first, by the trade in England being good up to November 1825, and no surplus stock on hand; therefore no active competition from thence in this market. Secondly, a gradual reduction in the high rate of wages previously paid, and which manufacturers had been some time attempting, in order that the wages paid in Ireland should approximate more to those paid in Yorkshire, and which they, to a considerable extent, succeeded in effecting, calculating on the active competition they would encounter from the English manufacturers when the protecting duties ceased, which might have been withdrawn two years sooner than they were, according to the Act of Union.

The panic in November and December 1825 in England was severely felt in Ireland. In the spring of 1826 the distress arising from accumulated stocks, which many manufacturers in England suffered from, induced them too often to make sacrifices which ended in their ruin, and to the most serious injury of the manufacturers of this country, such goods being bought and thrown into this market in large quantities, and at such low prices, that no solvent person could attempt to compete with them. Irish manufacturers had not only to contend with glutted market, but a reduction in the price of wool; and such was the reduction from these causes, as seriously to affect the stock on hand, solvent manufacturers refused to sell at the ruinous prices then offered, and, in general, their manufacturing operations were discontinued. This cause was attended with great

great loss to them in another respect. Naps and coating for women's wear, being the principal articles manufactured, were, by the low price of English cloth, put out of fashion, cloths being generally substituted for them. The Irish manufacturer had therefore not only to contend with low prices, but with a change of fashion to a considerable extent. This period of depression had effect on the wages then paid (although much reduced). Masters in their own defence were obliged to offer, and the workmen accepted, prices which were considered as low as the cheapest district in Yorkshire. The summer of 1826 brought with it great suffering to the workmen in every branch of manufactures in and about Dublin. The weavers, being a numerous body, whose wages seldom exceeded their wants, and in consequence had little or no saving put by, felt the distress more keenly; to relieve them very large subscriptions were obtained and distributed among them and other operatives, which assisted in some degree to remove their pressing wants.

Weavers as a body have not much to distinguish them from other classes of operatives, but being numerous, and as a class taking a larger portion of the cost of manufacturing wages to pay them, they have generally been subject to the first reduction in prices. Like other classes of workmen they often exhibit reckless disregard of the future, by neglecting to husband, with rigid economy, their wages when work is plenty, and earnings good. We had some examples to the contrary, and savings were made by them to a considerable extent; as much as 100*l.* or 150*l.* These examples, however, are rare, and latterly exist (I fear from necessity) to a very small extent, if at all. It is not likely that any state of trade will improve their condition much above what it is. To weave woollens requires little ingenuity; a smart lad would in a short time become a weaver; but that which is most likely to keep wages low in this department is the gradual introduction of power-looms. These have been erected in several establishments in Yorkshire, and found to answer, and will extend, and no doubt they must be introduced here.

The average number of our weavers for the last two years has been from 70 to 80. An industrious weaver, and good workman, with constant work 70 to 75 hours a week, will earn from 16*s.* to 18*s.* at our prices. One not so assiduous, or an indifferent workman, will of course earn much less; their earnings, as a class fully employed the above time, will be from 14*s.* to 16*s.* But as there are more weavers in Dublin than the trade can employ, their wages will not, on an average of one or two years, exceed 10*s.* or 11*s.* a week.

I do not see that any law can be made to improve the condition of the hand-loom weavers without interfering with the free employment of capital, nor is it likely that any state of trade will improve the prices paid to them, as power-loom weaving will always act as a check on the prices paid by such masters as only employ hand-loom weavers; and there are many circumstances connected with power-loom weaving of great importance to a manufacturer, the dispatch and regularity with which work can be executed; a web will take 16 to 18 days to weave by hand, at a cost of 33*s.* to 36*s.* A similar web will be done by a power-loom in six days, perhaps five days, at 8*s.* or 10*s.* expense for labour.

I believe there are few apprentices now learning the business, and it is not probable many will in future be taken to learn the trade of woollen weaving. In the woollen trade, weaving is generally conducted within large establishments; few are employed at their own houses by work being given out to them; the looms are too large and inconvenient for their dwellings.

The character of the woollen weavers is, I believe, generally good. We have found them anxious to be employed, and industrious whilst so, and never had occasion to complain of embezzlement, or pilfering the materials intrusted to their care, and in general they obey the directions as to their work with more cheerfulness and satisfaction to us than we have experienced from workmen in England; nor have we found habits of intemperance great amongst them; their earnings being low did not allow them to dissipate to the extent which some other classes indulge in who have higher wages."

John Malony and William Tod, woollen-weavers, state in part of their evidence: "We have been engaged as weavers for 21 years. In 1810 Mr. Hoskins, the great army-contractor, failed, which caused such an effect as to stop 22 employers in a slap. A week or fortnight before that crash, the weavers were better able to

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pay 1*s.* 10*d.* and 1*s.* 11*d.* for the loaf of bread than they are now able to pay 8*d.*; and many of the weavers with large families cannot get any bread, or even enough of dry potatoes, and those being nominally in employment, but kept waiting for work more than half their time. * * * * We both work in Mr. Willan's factory; he supplies us with everything necessary to weaving of the piece, even light, and makes no charge: formerly, when we used to employ a journeyman, we stopped 4*d.* out of every shilling he earned for the use of the loom, light, winding, oil, and cordage. When the manufacturers undertook to supply us with all the materials necessary for weaving, there was a reduction agreed to in our wages on this account equal to what we ourselves had stopped from our journeymen, 4*d.* in the shilling, or one-third. If all the hours we worked (on the work we were able to get, not from our own neglect) for the last three years were put together, they would not make up two years: we were kept idle, waiting for employment, one-third of each year, on an average, for the last five years. Putting good and bad weeks together for the last three years, if the books were overhauled, we have not earned more than 10*s.* a week. Some weeks we would earn 1*l.* or 1*l.* 5*s.* During the time we are waiting for work, we do not turn our hands to anything else, even if we could get it; we would lose what we have, if we did. When we are waiting for work, it is called walking, as we have nothing to do but walk—spinning street-yarn, wearing out our shoes. Twelve hours a day is the time we work, when we have a warp to do. The lowest price we have for weaving is 8*d.* a string (three yards 38 beer, kersey). There are 38 threads in every beer of every kind, coarse or fine; for a 43 beer in the warp we get 9*d.* a string (three yards); next 49 beer we get 10*d.* a string; next 54 beer 1*s.* a string; 56 beer, 1*s.* 2*d.* We weave from 56 to 59 for the one price; a 63 beer cloth, 1*s.* 5*d.* a string; a 68 beer, up to 69, 1*s.* 9*d.* a string; from 69 beer up to 79, 2*s.* 2*d.* a string; from 79 up to 89 beer, 2*s.* 6*d.* a string; from 89 up to 99 beer, 2*s.* 8*d.* a string; from 99 up to 112 beer, 3*s.* a string. The amount of our earnings depends on our chance of getting to weave those cloths for which the higher price is paid; for, though it takes us a longer time to weave the high-price cloth, still, as there is always some time between the finishing of the most difficult piece and the getting of another, we do not mind the time it takes us (as it is better to be doing something than walking), but look rather to the amount of money we are to get for the weaving of the piece: some pieces we get 17*s.* for, others 2*l.* 7*s.* When work is plenty, we do not so much mind the priced piece we get to weave; but when work is scarce, the piece that is paid most money for (no matter how much more time it takes) is the best. At the present rate of wages, the most skilful weaver, even if he had constant work during the year, it would give him as much as he could do to bring round 14*s.* or 15*s.* a week; this we speak of, as from the factory we work in being the best in Ireland, and making the finest cloth that can be made. The least skilful, even if they had constant work, would not earn more than 10*s.* a week; but there are very few of these going amongst our men. A youth of intelligence from 15 to 17 could, after a year's practice, learn to weave as well as any adult. The men do not, now trade is so low, take any apprentices; but our employer can take as many as he likes. He has seven apprentices now; they are bound to him for five years; he gives them half their earnings for the first three years, two-thirds for the last two years. We do not think there are more than 300 looms, under the name of employment, in Dublin and its vicinity."

From the best information I was able to collect, it appears that the woollen manufactures in Ireland, previous to the present century, were treated as an exotic, artificially nurtured, and not naturally developed. Bounties, protecting duties, and monopolies, invited a host of minor manufacturers, with small capitals, to enter the business, and their competition, for a time, kept up the nominal rate of wages. Monopolies in Ireland, as elsewhere, were injurious not only to the community, but to the very party they were designed to benefit. The manufacturer, lulled by the false security of what seemed a sure demand, overrated his profits. Acting on this miscalculation, he gave the workmen almost any sum they pleased to ask, when it was necessary to secure a lucrative contract; in fact, he was paying wages out of his capital. Nor was this system so profitable to the workmen as some of the witnesses have represented. If the nominal rate of wages was higher in Ireland, employment was more steady in Yorkshire; and it is not improbable that at the end of a year the total earnings of the English operative would have been the larger sum. Another circumstance,

stance, still more important, in a moral point of view, must be taken into account in striking the balance; employment, at once lucrative and uncertain, is the most powerful incentive to habits of improvidence and dissipation. "Lightly got, lightly gone," is a proverb fearfully illustrated in the history of every class of British artizans, but in none more than the woollen weavers of Ireland; they feasted one week, they fasted the next; extravagant wages led to extravagant riot; debauchery and starvation followed each other in a regular cycle, whose returns could be calculated with almost mathematical precision.

Mr. Willans has shown that the prosperity of the woollen trade, previous to the removal of the protecting duties in 1823, was greatly exaggerated, and that they did not afford to the manufacturers the advantages intended. There can be no doubt that considerable benefit resulted from the substitution of large capitalists for the smaller manufacturers, so numerous previous to 1810, a change which took place about the year 1812 The panic of 1825, the results of which were not fully developed until the following year, produced, as fully stated and explained by Mr. Willans, great distress among the Dublin operatives, but not greater than was felt at the same time in the manufacturing districts of England. I am, however, led to believe that this crisis produced many beneficial effects; it swept away all the establishments supported by a system of fictitious credit, and it led to the examination of the rate of wages, and a comparison of the amount with the actual instead of the nominal profits. Wages were consequently reduced; but had the old system been retained, the crash would have been eventually more ruinous, and employment would have ceased altogether. Thus, what the woollen trade lost in extent it gained in real stability; it is now in a healthy and progressive condition, especially as the advancement of steam navigation has opened new markets for Irish woollen goods in the south and west of England. Its continued progress will, however, I think, necessitate the introduction of power-looms. If this be done gradually, the hand-loom weavers will have little cause to complain; if suddenly, great and unavoidable distress for a season will follow. But such distress can only be temporary, for new sources of employment, by the general improvement of the country, and by the departments of weaving to which the power-loom does not apply being extended.

At Rathdrum my attention was directed to a branch of the woollen trade, once very flourishing and extensive, but now I may say wholly extinct, the manufacture of flannels. There were 12 fairs held annually at Rathdrum, and it was stated that previous to 1816 so many as 1,200 pieces of flannel were offered for sale at a single fair. After the year 1818 the trade declined so rapidly, that in 1830 the Flannel Hall was closed and the fairs were at an end. The cause assigned for this reverse is the inability of small manufacturers to compete with English capitalists, and the application of machinery to the spinning and weaving, which had been formerly done by hand; I beg, however, to direct the attention of the Commissioners to the fact that this change was not productive of the great individual distress which might have been anticipated. Mr. Manning, an intelligent witness, says, "The weavers, as they found the trade declining, went into other employments, and no additional were applied to the weaving: thus, when the Hall closed the weavers disappeared." He also explains undesignedly, but satisfactorily, how it happened that the flannel weavers did not persevere in a ruinous and hopeless competition: "The hand-loom weavers formerly in this district of the country were not connected with land; they resided chiefly in towns, and even those who lived in rural districts attended to nothing but flannel weaving." They were thus forced to meet the change.

I have now only to repeat my opinion that the woollen trade of Ireland is in a more sound and healthy condition than it ever has been, and that its yearly advance may be confidently expected. But in this, above all other trades, the agriculturist must lend his aid to the improvement of the manufacture; the breeding of sheep, with a view to the improvement of the fleece, has hitherto received very little attention in Ireland; the wool is at present only suited for the manufacture of the coarser cloths and friezes for domestic manufacture amongst the peasantry, and hence that branch of the woollen trade has received considerable extension.

I do not believe that any special legislative enactment would improve the condition of the woollen weavers, or accelerate the progress of the woollen trade in

Ireland; on the contrary, I am persuaded that protecting duties, bounties, and even loans, would materially retard it, and that they so acted when applied. Improvement in the means of transit between the metropolis and the south of Ireland, would materially assist this rising trade; it would enable the capitalist to take advantage of the most valuable sites where water power is now absolutely running to waste in so many places in Munster. It would bring the rich pasturages of Limerick and Tipperary into direct contact with Dublin, opening a regular market for the wool already grown, and furnishing an incentive for the production of a better staple. At the present moment manufacturers can obtain wool from Essex with less risk of disappointment and less cost of carriage than from Tipperary or Limerick. For the same reasons, the facilities afforded by steam navigation, and the difficulties of land carriage, the great bulk of Irish wool is exported to England, and a portion of it is even sent to France. Some of the persons I examined strongly recommended a heavy duty on the export of raw wool, an expedient which would absolutely tend to limit rather than increase the present supply; but the object we have in view would be beneficially effected, were the facilities of intercourse between the manufacturing and wool-producing districts increased.

In concluding this Report, without at all denying that distress exists among the hand-loom weavers, I feel bound to state my conviction that it has been greatly exaggerated; and in those localities investigated by me, from whence evidence as to the distress of the hand-loom weavers had been laid before the Committee of the House of Commons on this subject in 1833 and 1834, I did not find the statements borne out by any facts I was able to obtain; and to say that, by the witnesses I allude to, the distress was exaggerated would be too mild a term—created, in most cases, would more aptly apply. At Drogheda, for instance, where the earnings of the weavers are so low as not to require misstatement for the object in view, I find it asserted that the earnings of the weavers, in 1834, were from 2*s.* 4*d.* to 4*s.* net per week. Now, for the three years ending July 1838, I find that the net earnings of the lowest and worst paid of the Drogheda weavers amounted to from 3*s.* 4*d.* to 5*s.* per week, and this estimate includes the year 1837, one of the most unprecedented years of depression that ever occurred in the trade. No attempt is made to show the number of looms employed in each family, or the description of labour employed on them, or the nature of the deductions which cause the distinction between the gross and the net earnings. Are not these circumstances necessary to the formation of a sound opinion on the subject?

The miserable are always prone to over-rate their sufferings, and in no country is the tendency to exaggeration on this point so great as it is in Ireland. In some localities the weavers seemed at first to imagine that I had Fortunatus's purse, and that gold was to be doled out according to the intensity of the distress they represented themselves to be in.

There are also those who seek opportunities of indulging benevolence who speak of the misery they are anxious to relieve in stronger language than the actual circumstances will justify. This exaggeration has not been unproductive of mischievous effects: it has diverted the attention of both hand-loom weavers and their patrons from the causes of the evil, and fixed it exclusively on the evil itself. The weaver is taught that the nature and amount of the pressure to which he is subject are such as to prevent its alleviation by any exertion of his own, and he is induced to seek relief from Parliament, just as if a legislative Act could alter the course of nature. The unenlightened charity of some benevolent individuals rests satisfied with temporary relief, bestowed without any prudential regard to consequences, or at best takes up some scheme propagated by the cry of party, and adopted without even the form of examination.

The facility with which the trade of a weaver is learned, the early age at which the services of children can be made available, the superior freedom from restraint in working at home rather than in a factory, and above all, the miserable remuneration and periodical uncertainty, necessarily tend to lower the value of hand-loom labour. These are causes over which the Legislature can exercise no direct control; Acts of Parliament cannot change the natural progress of society, and the effort to render more profitable a branch of industry, whose derangements arise from the ordinary course of events, would afford only temporary relief to that branch, and would ruin others which are growing and flourishing.

flourishing. But in the political, as in the physical world, there are quacks who attempt to cure unsightly sores by topical remedies, which only drive the disease in from the surface to fasten on the constitution.

Where a direct struggle takes place between hand-loom labour and machinery, the former must assuredly be eventually beaten, and driven to seek employment in other sources of productive industry, or on the production of a fabric with which power-looms do not directly compete. I have shown that in some places the wages of the labourers are so low, that manual labour can still, to a certain extent, compete with machinery; but I have also shown that the point at which this wretched species of competition must cease and determine is clearly discernible, even were there no continued improvement in mechanical power. Legislative interference would induce more agricultural labourers to come into a market already badly apportioned, if not overstocked; and it would therefore eventually tend to lower the rate of remuneration for hand-loom labour, whose amount all parties unite in deploring.

Any measure which would benefit industry generally, and facilitate the accumulation of the profits of labour, would of course benefit the hand-loom weavers, but rather as individuals than as a class. Capital, whether small or great, will naturally go to the most profitable mode of employment; and the hand-loom weavers are the first to declare that the profits of their employment are miserably inadequate, and that they are diminishing with frightful rapidity. I need not enter upon any examination of any of the schemes proposed for the general improvement of Ireland; supposing that all, or any of them, were as successful as their most sanguine projectors imagine, they could only open new branches of industry to the present hand-loom weavers.

I have noticed the apparent exception of the tabinet or poplin manufacture, and have stated my reasons for believing that it is an unhealthy trade, supported by extrinsic and artificial means. In addition to what I have already mentioned, it deserves to be remarked, that in the history of manufactures, no fact is more apparent than that the test of any branch of industry taking root in a country is the extension of its productions to every class of society. Every visitor to a gallery of Egyptian antiquities is struck by seeing that, while the rich had images and amulets of precious stones and metals, those beneath them had the self-same patterns in glass or less precious metals; and descending lower in the scale of society, we have again the same patterns in earthenware, and even in clay glazed over by some vitrifying process. The cotton trade, the silk trade, the stocking trade, and the lace trade present similar results in our own day; the production of the finer fabric, if a legitimate branch of industry, has a natural tendency to foster imitative products of cheaper and perhaps coarser materials. I may instance one of the latest articles introduced by fashion, the *mouseline de laine*, which within a very few years has run through all the gradations of rank: while the finer is purchased by the higher classes for 5*l.*, the inferior may be bought by those of a more limited means for as many shillings. Nothing like this tendency to popularize itself is discernible in the tabinet manufacture of Dublin; it is a fashionable, but it is only a fashionable article.

The manufacturers and the weavers should not trust too much to the exclusive feeling which induces certain persons to purchase fabrics of which the vulgar cannot easily procure imitations. Such a feeling was heretofore embodied in the sumptuary laws of our ancestors; it utterly failed of the desired effect, though sustained by the authority of the Legislature; and assuredly it will not be found less inoperative when it has no other support than the caprice of fashion.

Referring to my instructions *seriatim*, I shall *briefly* note the effect on the hand-loom trade of causes unconnected with the conduct of the operatives, and then say a few words on the effects of their conduct.

A. 1.—The substitution of calico and other cotton fabrics for linen has rather checked the natural growth of the linen trade than directly depressed it. The actual consumption has not diminished but increased; but it has not increased in the same proportion as the population.

Machinery, undoubtedly, has diminished the demand for hand-loom labour on some fabrics, and driven it out of the market almost altogether on others. There

are fabrics with which machinery has not, and, in my opinion, never can compete with the hand-loom; and the application of machinery to the production of those fabrics to which it can be profitably employed has increased the demand for those fabrics to which it has not, and, in all probability, cannot be applied. Let the hand-loom weavers turn their attention and application to the production of those fabrics on which mechanical power does not compete with them, and let them apportion and regulate their numbers according to the demand in the market for their labour on such productions; but let them not attempt to prolong a contest with machinery on those fabrics to which it has been successfully applied, the results of which must be poverty and ultimate defeat, or be led astray by the inconsiderate kindness of weak friends; no class of men have suffered more, and require more to be protected from, their friends than the hand-loom weavers; and the accomplishment of this desirable object will, I would fain hope, be the results of the present Commission to inquire into their state, in the conducting of which, and in my present Report on the result of my inquiries, the great difficulty I have had to contend against was to avoid doing mischief, and raising hopes which could never be realized.

I am not aware of any legislative enactments, peculiar to hand-loom weaving, that mischievously affect the trade of Ireland, beyond those regulations of the linen trade already noticed, which have produced some practical inconvenience.

A. 3 and 4.—The corn laws, the resumption of cash payments, and the general pressure of taxation, equally affect every branch of manufacturing industry in Ireland. The real or supposed evils arising from such causes do not press more heavily on the hand-loom weavers than on any other class of the community. Cheaper provisions and lighter taxes would set free fresh capital for the encouragement of industry; but they could not render unprofitable labour lucrative; they could not enable human bones and muscles to compete with the steam-engine and the power-loom.

A. 5 and 6.—The wages paid by the master manufacturer to the operative hand-loom weavers, like the wages in every other branch of business, are regulated by the profits derived from the trade. Taking into account the amount of capital invested, the risk of loss, and the proportion of demand to supply, I do not believe that the profits of the master manufacturer are exorbitant; if they were so, new adventurers would be enticed into the business, and profits would soon find their level. The employers of hand-loom weavers have no more power to fix their rate of wages than the employers of labourers in any of the other trades; and I have no reason to believe that they ever contemplated any such absurdity.

B. 1 and 2.—Combinations and strikes, the consequences of which I have detailed, at considerable length, in this Report, have had, amongst others, the effect of disguising from the operative the realities of his position. Could he see that the success of his cause, by such efforts, were hopeless, he would abandon such attempts; and if he could not obtain a livelihood at hand-loom weaving, he would seek employment in a different branch of industry. Combinations and strikes, such as I have alluded to, have injured and decreased the demand for hand-loom weaving, by compelling several employers to withdraw their capital from it. By attempting to resist the natural and inevitable operations and results of machinery, the hand-loom weavers have prevented the necessary change from being productive of less disturbance; they have lessened the means of escape presented to them; and, like the mutinous sailors of whom I have somewhere read, have staved the boats at the moment the ship was sinking.

B. 3.—The miserably low wages paid to agricultural labourers in Ireland, and the periodical suspensions of employment, have, as I before stated, driven numbers into the trade of hand-loom weaving.

B. 4.—The moral qualities of the hand-loom weavers do not materially differ from those of other artisans in Ireland. Ignorance rather than positive vice is to be assigned as a leading characteristic of their condition. They have remained stationary in many localities, while all around them was in progress, and I much fear that the world has got so far in advance of them as only to be overtaken at the expense of great suffering. I must add, that the delusive hopes held out to them by well-meaning but ill-judging philanthropists, have tended in no slight degree

degree to prevent them from discovering other resources, or availing themselves of such when offered. Weavers of Ireland.

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The palliatives afforded by spontaneous bursts of benevolence only afford temporay relief, and leave the sufferers worse than they found them. Legislative enactments cannot alter the course of nature, and the expectation of them, unwisely excited, has in no slight degree tended to blind the weavers to their condition, and has led them to seek from Parliament what they can obtain only from themselves. If they were wise, the hand-loom weavers would regard patronage and legislative interference, beyond the general and impartial superintendence which the Legislature ought to extend to every class of Her Majesty's subjects, as curses rather than blessings, and would reply to those who would proffer such unnatural aid, as the French manufacturers did to Colbert, "*Laissez nous faire!*"

I have, &c.

(signed) *C. G. Otway.*

State of Education in Belfast and its Vicinity.

Examination of *Maurice Cross*, Esq.

Q. 1. Has your residence in Belfast afforded you any opportunities of ascertaining what provision is made for the education of the poor; and what is your profession or occupation?

A. 1. During a residence of 24 years in Belfast, my avocations have afforded me favourable opportunities of observing the progress and state of popular education in this town and its vicinity. I am at present, and have been for some years, Secretary to the Frederick-street Lancasterian National School. For the last 14 years I have conducted the business of the Savings' bank. Opportunities for obtaining information.

2. How many daily schools are there in Belfast, and are they connected with the Government or any other educational institutions?

2. There has been a considerable increase in the number of schools since 1830. The following are the day-schools at present in operation: 1st. The Frederick-street Lancasterian National School; 2d. The Brown-street School; 3d. The Donegal-street National School; 4th. The Parochial School in connexion with St. Ann's Church, which is that of the parish; 5th. St. George's Church School; 6th. Christ Church School; 7th. The Poor-house School. In the neighbourhood there are several, conducted either on the National or the Kildare-street system; the former is the more numerous class. Of the schools in Belfast, there are only two in connexion with the National Board, and one that adheres to the principles of the Kildare-street Association, but does not now receive any pecuniary grant. A small sum is charged for the instruction of the children in all but two. Three of these institutions have been established during the last seven years, besides several Sunday-schools. Provision for education in Belfast day-schools.

3. What is the number and character of the infant schools? To what an extent do the children of the hand-loom weavers attend them?

3. There are three infant schools connected with the establishments I have enumerated, and of these only one that I consider to be efficiently managed, according to the excellent plan of Mr. Wilderspin. The most strenuous exertions should be made to increase these valuable institutions, and to place them on a permanent footing. There is one in connexion with the Belfast Academy for the children of the respectable inhabitants. Infant schools.

I have had occasion to inquire into the occupations of the parents of the children attending schools for the poor, and have uniformly found, that those of the hand-loom weavers were very limited in number. It is doubtful whether, in the

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the Frederick-street National School, one dozen are on the roll out of 700 pupils. The poverty and ignorance of their parents are to be assigned as the reason for this deplorable indifference to the blessings of education. The same observation applies to the other large seminaries in Belfast and its vicinity.

4. Are the Sunday-schools numerous and well conducted? Do the children of hand-loom weavers attend the Sunday-schools in a greater proportion than the day-schools?

Sunday-schools.

4. There is a Sunday-school connected with each of the day-schools I have mentioned, besides several others which have been established in connexion with the Presbyterian, Methodist, and Dissenting congregations. Some new ones are in progress, of which one is about to be established, both for daily and Sabbath instruction, under the auspices of the Unitarian body. These schools are in general conducted with zeal and attention.

Of the pupils in attendance only a few belong to hand-loom weavers. They have not the means of obtaining comfortable clothing; and a feeling of pride prevents many from appearing amongst other children who are more respectably attired on the Sabbath-day. Another reason for their not generally availing themselves of the advantages of Sunday-schools is worthy of observation. They are usually employed in mills during the week; and it is not extraordinary that the protracted hours of unwholesome labour for six days should render them disinclined to mental occupation on the seventh. There can be no doubt, from the evidence collected in various towns, on the state of education among the working classes, that the offspring of weavers are generally without instruction of any kind, whether literary, moral or religious.

5. What is the usual course of instruction in the day-schools? How far applicable to the wants of a manufacturing population, requiring information as to their respective trades, and the nature of the implements which they use?

Course of instruction in the daily schools.

5. The branches taught and the methods of teaching them in the daily schools, vary in some slight particulars; but the course usually given is of a limited and superficial character, comprising little more than reading, writing, and arithmetic, and scriptural instruction. In the Frederick-street National School, the curriculum of study has of late been considerably extended, and admits of still further improvement. The attainments of the teachers of these schools are by no means equal; and consequently the methods of teaching do not reach the same standard of efficiency. Manual labour is in no case connected with intellectual instruction, nor is there an adequate provision made for physical and moral education, by means of well-ascertained principles and systematic methods. For the former purpose, there should be conveniences for gymnastic exercises, and commodious play-grounds.

It is of the utmost importance, that the instruction given in these schools should be adapted in its character and objects to the position in society of those who receive it. Such is not generally the case. It is not calculated to supply the wants of the labouring classes, either in the agricultural or manufacturing districts. The only remedy for this evil is Industrial schools, which would connect the knowledge acquired with the pursuits in future life of the pupils, and combine with instruction in letters, habits of industry, and the acquisition of knowledge in useful trades, arts, and manufactures.

6. Are the girls' schools sufficient in number, and efficiently managed? Is the attendance of the children of the hand-loom weavers more numerous in the girls' than in the boys' schools?

Female schools, their character and object.

6. There is accommodation for the education of the girls in all the schools I have specified; but it is not, in my opinion, of the requisite nature and extent, nor has the course of instruction a specific reference to the domestic pursuits in which females are likely to be engaged in after life.

I see no reason why a system of industrial occupation should not be adopted in girls' schools. The experiment has been found to succeed in England. Arrangements should be made to make girls conversant, while at school, with the business of a household. They should be taught how to select and make up clothing.

clothing. Principles should be inculcated, and habits formed, which would be likely to make them efficient servants, and good wives.

7. What is the nature of the instruction given in your Sunday-schools?

Instruction in Sunday schools.

7. The religious and moral instruction given in our Sunday-schools, is based upon the reading of the Scriptures, and is generally accompanied by the use of catechisms, especially in those schools strictly congregational; and in some cases by oral and written explanations of a doctrinal nature. The clergyman of the congregation is assisted in this duty by teachers, who are usually members of the same religious body. Their services are active and gratuitous.

8. What do you consider to be the object and tendency of your Congregational schools?

Congregational schools, their object and tendency.

8. The schools in connexion with religious bodies, and which are rapidly increasing, are principally the offspring of late years. Their augmentation has been occasioned, in some degree, by the controversy that has so long existed on the subject of the national system of education for Ireland, and by the increased importance which religious education has acquired in the estimation of society at large. That their effect is to promote sectarianism cannot be doubted. Whilst children of all religious persuasions are admissible by their fundamental regulations, it will be found on examination, that the great majority belong to the place of worship with which the seminary happens to be connected. The nature of the instruction imparted has a decided tendency to produce this result. The government of these schools cannot fail to impede the progress of a united system of education. The committees are, with few exceptions, composed of persons professing the same religious opinions, and guided by the clergymen of their respective congregations. My inquiries have enabled me to ascertain, that very few Roman-catholics, in comparison with the whole number on the books, attend schools of this description. After an attentive and patient consideration of the subject in all its bearings, I give it as my deliberate opinion, that a large proportion of the Clergy of all persuasions, and especially of the Established Church, and the Presbyterian body, are unfavourable to a united system of education, on principles suitable to the circumstances of Ireland; that they are combining their efforts to establish sectarian schools; and that many of those who entertain more liberal and conciliatory views of national education, are deterred by their ecclesiastical superiors, by various considerations connected with their position and prospects in their sacred profession, and by the influence of party, from openly expressing, advocating, and acting up to their opinions.

9. Assuming that the objects and effects of such schools are what you state them to be, have they not afforded increased facilities to the progress of education?

Effect of congregational schools in increasing the means of education.

9. It is unquestionable, that schools of this description have augmented the means of education, and have therefore produced beneficial results; nor can there be a doubt, that the doctrinal instruction communicated by means of them, is of importance to the particular denomination holding the opinions which its members are taught. It is obvious, however, that the practical effect of this system, must be either to proselytize or exclude; that in the existing circumstances of Ireland, the great majority of the population derive no benefit from it, and that a united education, if permitted to be effectively and uninterruptedly carried on, could not fail to produce the most beneficial results. The experiment has been much impeded by various causes, and if it should be found, after a fair trial, altogether impracticable, it will be owing to the intemperate opposition of the Clergy, and of lay political partisans. Their co-operation would have materially facilitated its accomplishment, and effectually prevented abuse. If the parents were not influenced and prejudiced by their religious pastors, they would willingly send their children to schools where different religious denominations are taught together, and feel grateful for the advantages conferred. Endowments to separate schools, in the present juncture of Irish affairs, would increase religious animosity, and foster political divisions.

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10. What is your opinion of the mode in which scriptural instruction is given in the schools with which you are best acquainted?

The nature of the scriptural instruction given in the majority of schools, and its inadequacy.

10. I have always been strongly impressed with the paramount importance of scriptural instruction, and am of opinion that it should not be excluded from any system of national education, care being taken, that in the communication of such instruction, no violence be done to the conscientious opinions of any religious body of Christians. I am firmly convinced, that the method of teaching the sacred writings in the majority of the daily and Sunday schools, is not calculated to convey sound scriptural information, to make a lasting impression upon the minds of the children, or to influence their conduct according to Christian principles. My opportunities have been frequent of observing how this department was conducted in the Kildare-street Society schools, and other institutions of a similar kind, and my conviction is, that according to their plan, the pupils seldom learned more than the words of the Old and New Testament, whilst they were left in total ignorance of their sense and application. The memory was cultivated, but the understanding left a waste. Scriptural knowledge thus communicated ranks little higher than a mere exercise of the memory. I cordially approve of a Bible-class being in every school, provided that there be no constraint on those to join it whose parents or guardians may entertain conscientious scruples on the subject, that it be conducted in a beneficial and reverential manner, and where there are no peculiar circumstances to prevent its formation. There should be neither exclusion nor compulsion.

11. Do you approve of the schoolmasters instructing the children in religion?

Schoolmasters should not be teachers of religion.

11. The ordinary teachers are not competent to explain the doctrines of particular sects, and should not be permitted to do so in schools attended by the children of different denominations. I see no difficulty, however, in their teaching the Scriptures on a more systematic and useful plan than has been hitherto adopted, and inculcating, in a simple and intelligible manner, the fundamental principles of natural and revealed religion in which all Christian sects concur. To the use of scripture-extracts I see no reasonable objection, if not compiled with a view to proselytize, or to supersede the use of the whole Scriptures under proper direction. Instruction in particular doctrines, of which I do not undervalue the importance, should, in my judgment, be left to the religious pastors of the children; I would commit to them the whole arrangement of the matter; and, keeping in view the present state of religious parties in Ireland, it appears to me expedient not to give this species of instruction in the school-rooms, but in the places of worship of those communions to which the children belong. On principle, I am not averse to particular religious instruction being given in the school-rooms by the clergy of various persuasions, at stated periods; but in the peculiar circumstances of Ireland such a plan can never be generally and efficiently adopted. The clergy are generally opposed to it, and will not, I fear, unite for the purpose of carrying it forward. I question if any positive and uniform arrangement can be made, that would suit the local circumstances of all the schools, or that is likely to meet with general approval and adoption. Under these circumstances, it would perhaps be the safest and most practicable plan to leave this delicate matter to be regulated by the local patrons and the clergy.

12. What are the principal obstacles which, in your judgment, impede general education?

The principal impediments in the way of a general and sound system of education.

12. There are many obstacles to the progress of a sound and comprehensive system of national education, and which render the instruction communicated both inferior in quality and insufficient in quantity; in fact, little better than total ignorance. Of these, the greatest in magnitude is the poverty of the parents, which, in many instances, obliges them to keep their children at home for the want of suitable clothing, or to withdraw them from school before they have made sufficient progress in their studies for the purpose of putting them to work, and by this means, obtaining pecuniary assistance from their labour. The wages of the labouring classes, are in general insufficient to procure a comfortable subsistence, and the lamentable consequence is, that their offspring are sent to toil in manufactories, or at other unwholesome employments, at a very early period of life, before their physical energies have been developed,

developed, their minds cultivated, or their moral principles formed. In all the schools with which I am acquainted, there is always more than one-third of the scholars absent; and I should think, that the average period that each child is at school before being withdrawn, does not exceed six months. I fear that it is not in the power of the Legislature to remove this evil, though it might probably be lessened by judicious regulations. The conclusion I draw from these facts is this, that there must be an amelioration in the physical condition of the labouring classes before the instruction of their offspring will be commensurate with their wants, and suitable in character to their usefulness and position in society.

13. Do you consider that proper attention is paid to the physical education of the children, and to occupations of an industrial kind?

Necessity for physical education and manual occupations.

13. Considering the rapid increase of manufacturing establishments, especially in the north of Ireland, and in the neighbourhood of large towns, there is an imperative necessity for a system of physical education, carried on upon effective principles, and in places attached to the schools. It would be desirable, where it is practicable, to combine manual with other occupations. The evil we have to contend with is, that the children leave school with a smattering of reading, writing, and arithmetic, but without having been trained to industrious habits, and destitute of any knowledge that will qualify them to obtain an honest subsistence when they arrive at the age of manhood. In several places in England, the experiment of combining work with school instruction has succeeded.

14. Is it your opinion that the teachers are well qualified for their situations, and adequately remunerated?

Qualifications, and remuneration of teachers.

14. It is in vain to expect that the education of the poor will be sufficiently extensive or permanent, or conducted upon approved methods, until means be adopted to provide a well-qualified class of teachers, and to remunerate them in proportion to their merits and services. The majority are imperfectly taught, and inadequately paid. It is not in the power of individuals or local boards to supply this want. It is the province of the Legislature, and the expense should be defrayed out of the national funds. There are not more than three schools in Belfast, in which the salaries of the teachers exceed 50*l.* per annum, whilst in the country districts they seldom amount to 25*l.*, and in many cases they are considerably under that sum. I should not estimate the average at more than 20*l.* per annum. As the monitorial system is adopted to a certain extent in the majority of the schools, some plan should be devised of compensating the monitors for their exertions by means of rewards or honorary distinctions, otherwise they have not the requisite stimulus to exert themselves, and leave school before they have been sufficiently trained to the duties of their office, which are too often languidly and imperfectly discharged. They should be trained as teachers, and when duly qualified, be dispersed over the country to introduce into schools improved modes of instruction.

15. You seem to entertain an unfavourable opinion of the girls' schools; in what respect are they deficient?

State of our female schools.

15. I have already stated that I think the education given in our girls' schools is miserably deficient. The services of females are more frequently required at home than those of boys, and the consequence is, their attendance at school is more irregular. The needlework department is inefficiently conducted for want of assistance to the teacher, who cannot, in schools numerously attended, do justice to the various branches she is required to teach. Needlework should be taught thoroughly by mistresses appointed for the purpose; and as the greater number of the girls are destined to make a livelihood by becoming servants, some plan should be contrived for instructing them in the multifarious and important duties of household service. According to the meagre and imperfect plan at present pursued, there is an entire want of instruction in the plainest elements of domestic economy. No lessons are given to the advanced girls on the evils of waste, negligence, and carelessness in the discharge of household duties; and hence it is they are permitted to grow up, and become wives, without habits of industry, without tidiness or cleanliness, or a knowledge of any of

those requisites which would make their homes the abode of decency and comfort. There are also several branches of employment with which they might be made familiar, if the usages of society admitted of it, and which, if efficiently taught, would raise their condition in society by opening up new channels of useful and remunerative employment. Moral education, in these schools, does not occupy the rank which its importance deserves.

16. Would you recommend the establishment of school and teachers libraries?

Importance and use of school and teachers' libraries.

16. I have witnessed, with sincere gratification, the beneficial effects resulting from a lending-library in the Frederick-street National School. The boys cheerfully contribute a small sum weekly to its support; their desire to peruse the useful works of which it is composed, affords the most decisive proof of the taste for information which it has been the means of awakening and fostering, not merely among the children but their parents. Some of the pupils have read all the books, and are waiting most anxiously for new ones to be added to the collection. Our teachers' library, which consists of many valuable educational productions, has also been attended with good effects. It is only in a few of our large schools, principally in towns, that resources are available for this important object; and it will never be effectually promoted, till a portion of the national funds be appropriated to it in every school under the control of the Government.

17. Do you consider the general registries kept in the schools defective in the nature and extent of the information they contain?

Improved method of keeping the general registry-book in our daily schools.

17. The method usually adopted in our daily and Sunday schools of keeping a registry of the scholars, admits of great improvement. It should be so arranged as to exhibit a more accurate statement of the attendance of each child, from the period of admission into the school till its withdrawal, and of the actual extent of instruction received during the time. It should state the total number of weeks each pupil was absent from the day the name was enrolled; the trade or occupation of the parents should be stated; and some record should be kept of what employment the children follow after leaving school, so that reference might be made, at any future period, if considered desirable, to the persons in whose service they may have been engaged. There would be no difficulty in ascertaining when the children were admitted, whether the father and mother could read or write, which should also be entered in the school-register. This would furnish important data on the statistics of education among the adult portion of the working classes—a branch of information that has hitherto been wholly neglected.

18. Are not the ignorance and poverty of the parents a barrier to the progress of education, and peculiarly affecting the hand-loom weavers?

Means by which the parents might be enlightened.

18. One serious obstacle to the success of schools for the poor, is the ignorance and prejudice of the parents. This might be partly removed, if the inspectors of Government schools, who ought to be conversant with the science and practice of education, were to convene meetings of the parents in their respective districts, explain to them the principles and advantages of the schools where their children were receiving instruction, and the duties imposed upon them to promote the intellectual, moral, and religious improvement of their families. If our teachers were properly trained, this duty might occasionally be performed by them, under the inspection of the local committees and patrons; and it would have the effect of forming a bond of union between the teachers, the pupils, and their parents.

The poverty and ignorance to which I have referred as impeding the progress of education, are peculiarly applicable to the condition of the hand-loom weavers. As a class, they have made no advancement, either intellectually or morally. If educated at all, the instruction they have received is not of the kind required to enable them to form a correct and enlightened view of their own position in society. They are the victims of delusion in all matters affecting their real interests. They do not understand the principles of sound legislation; they have formed erroneous opinions of the relations of employers and labourers,

of

of masters and servants; and hence it is, that they look to Legislative enactments as a panacea for the evils under which they labour. To save them from the consequences of these chimeras, they must be educated upon comprehensive and sound principles; not the education which begins and ends with the elementary branches of learning, but which will have an effect upon their conduct in every relation of life, as citizens, husbands, and fathers.

19. Would any advantage arise from the formation of teachers' associations?

Teachers' institutes or associations.

19. I conceive that the establishment of teachers' institutes or associations, would tend materially to diffuse useful information on the theory and practice of education, and to elevate the character and condition of schoolmasters. They could be made powerful engines for the spread of sound and enlightened views. The Government might aid them in their formation and maintenance, by providing a judicious code of legislation for their guidance, and contributing assistance towards the purchase of the best works on educational subjects. Friendly Societies, among teachers as a class, should also be encouraged as an efficacious and certain means of relief in sickness, a provision in old age, and a source of pecuniary benefit, after their decease, to their wives and children.

20. Is anything required to be done to promote education and diffuse useful knowledge among the adult classes?

Subsidiary education required for the adult population.

20. The ignorance of adults among the working classes is most deplorable. There cannot be a doubt that much might be done by the State to enlighten their minds. They require to be instructed in their duties as members of society. They have been left without political education. There is no reason why they should not be taught the elements of political science, the leading principles of political economy, their duties in relation to the other orders of society, and as the subjects of Government. This would fit them to exercise constitutionally, peacefully, and usefully their own rights, and to appreciate the rights of others. The public money has been wasted in futile and mischievous attempts to proselytize them to a particular creed. It is now time that some sacrifice should be made to make them good and intelligent citizens. The frightful evils which have arisen from Combination societies, will never be wholly prevented by legislative enactments. The only certain preventive is a sound and comprehensive education. The absurd and dangerous opinions, miscalled political principles, now so prevalent among too many of the labouring classes, are the deformed and loathsome offspring of national ignorance. Village libraries, popular lectureships, literary and scientific institutions, would be powerful agents in refining the taste, improving the habits, and correcting the prejudices of the people; and though it would not be desirable, if practicable, to put such institutions under the exclusive superintendence of the Government, yet, there are many ways in which the interposition of our rulers would be beneficial in facilitating their progress, improving their organization, and investing them with a more permanent character.

21. Having stated a number of useful objects which ought to be accomplished, do you think that they are practicable without the assistance of Government?

Insufficiency of voluntary support and administration in carrying these objects into effect.

21. From the statements I have made, and the opinions I have expressed, you must have perceived that I am firmly convinced of the insufficiency of voluntary support and administration to carry into full effect the various objects referred to in my examination. I am ready to acknowledge the force of many of the objections urged by persons of talent, information, and judgment, against the interference or direction of the Government in the education of the people; and I am deeply sensible how much the difficulty of the experiment is increased by the peculiar circumstances of Ireland; but after a patient and minute examination of all these objections and difficulties, I am not the less thoroughly convinced, that the voluntary principle will never supply a system of education complete in all its parts, effective in its plans, containing the elements of durability, and possessing the power of adaptation to the growing wants of the age. Experience has proved, that private benevolence has failed to establish schools to the requi-

Weavers of Ireland.

Report of C. G. Otway, Esq.

site extent, or to conduct them with uniform success. Various circumstances will always occur in every community, to prevent the parents and guardians of youth from discharging efficiently this important office. It follows, therefore, that it is the paramount duty of every wise and good Government to make an adequate provision for the intellectual, moral, and religious education of all classes, and to carry it vigorously into effect, with a due regard to the special circumstances of the country, religious, social, and political, for whose benefit it is intended. It is no doubt desirable that the clergy and laity of all denominations, should combine their efforts to work the machinery of a national system of instruction; but if from conscientious scruples, religious prejudices, or political hostility, any one sect or party withhold its concurrence, that affords no valid reason why the project should be abandoned. Let the means of education be offered to all, and leave the people to accept or reject them as they may deem most expedient. Persons who prefer to see education untrammelled by Government control, should have the privilege, whether as individuals or associated bodies, to reject assistance out of the public funds; but the Legislature should nevertheless discharge its obligation to the community, firmly and consistently, in spite of the formidable difficulties which they ought to be prepared to encounter, and if possible to subdue.

REPORT from *Richard M. Muggeridge*, Esq., on the LINEN and COTTON MANUFACTURES of *Ireland*.

To Nassau William Senior, Samuel Jones Loyd, William Edward Hickson, and John Leslie, Esquires, Her Majesty's Commissioners for inquiring into the Condition of the Hand-loom Weavers in the United Kingdom.

Gentlemen,

THE district you did me the honour to assign me as one of your Assistant Commissioners, embraced the counties of Lancashire, Westmorland, and Cumberland in England; and the greater part of the province of Ulster in Ireland. To these you subsequently added a portion of the West Riding of Yorkshire.

As the Manufactures of each of these districts, and, in some particulars, the condition of the persons engaged in them, differ widely from each other in their nature and character, it occurs to me that the best mode of laying before you the results of my inquiries will be to divide my subject into three separate reports:—namely, the

1st. On the Linen Manufacture of Ireland.
2d. On the Cotton Manufacture of Belfast, and its environs.
3d. On the Manufactures of my English district.

I propose to treat on these according to the order in which I have here placed them; and submit, therefore, 1st—a

REPORT on the LINEN MANUFACTURE OF IRELAND,

IN FOUR PARTS.

Part 1.—Historical Notice of.
— 2.—Present Statutory Laws, and Suggested Alterations in.
— 3.—Condition of Persons engaged in it.
— 4.—General Remarks on, and Communications respecting.

PART 1.—HISTORICAL NOTICE OF.

Linen Manufacture of Ireland.

Report of R. M. Muggeridge, Esq.

THE earliest mention of manufactures in Ireland is that of friezes and other woollen goods, which were carried on to some extent in the reign of Edward the Third*. In the "Dittamondi" of Fazzio Delli Uberti, a Florentine poet, who wrote about 1357, the following passage occurs:—

"Similimente passimo en Irlanda,
Laqual fra noi e degna di fama
Per le nobile soie che ci manda†."

This author had previously visited Ireland, and affords us, in the above passage, direct testimony of her serges being exported to Italy, and of their being in high repute, from the phrase "degna di fama." The author of "Della Crusca" also quotes a Florentine book of accounts of this period, in which one of the items charged is "a piece of serge of Ireland, for clothing the wife of Andrew."

The weavers of Catalonia were then competitors of the Irish, and one of the alleged grievances of the day was, "The Catalonian weavers are now basely imitating the serges of Ireland, and clothing the belles of Florence in them to our injury." Anderson also relates that, in 1376, woollen cloths were extensively made in Ireland‡.

The manufacture of the coarser qualities of linen is, probably, of nearly equal antiquity. In a curious little poem, written in the reign of Henry the Sixth, about the year 1430, by Hakluyt, intituled "The Process of English Policy," intended to inculcate the necessity of England being "Mistress of the seas," he enumerates the mercantile commodities of every country. Speaking of Ireland, he says,—

"Hides

* Madox, Rymer, &c.
† In the same way we pass into Ireland, which, among us, is worthy of renown for the excellent serges which she sends us.
‡ History of Commerce.

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"Hides and fish,—salmon, hakes, herring,
Irish wool, and *linen cloth*, faldinge,
And marterns good,—be their merchandice.
Herte's hides, and otter of venerie,
Skins of otter, squirrel and Irish hare,
Of sheep, lamb and fox is her chaffare;—
Fells of hides, and conies great plenty."

24 Hen. 8, c. 4. Anno 1533.

In the 24th year of Henry the Eighth, in whose reign, perhaps, more direct interference was made by the legislature in the infant manufactures of the kingdom than in that of any monarch who preceded or followed him, an Act was passed, requiring "every person occupying 60 acres of land in tillage to sow a quarter of an acre yearly in flax or hemp;" the preamble of such statute declaring its object to be "to protect and encourage the linen manufacture by an adequate supply of the raw material."

28 Hen. 8.

In 1558 another Act was passed, which subjected to the penalties of forfeiture and imprisonment, manufacturers of linen who did not produce substantial goods. The alleged grounds of the Act were, that the makers of linen cloth were guilty of "beating the material, and ever casting upon the same certain deceitful liquors, mingled with chalk, and other like things, whereby the said cloth is not only made to seem much finer and thicker to the eye than it is indeed, but also the thread thereof be so loosed and made weak, that after three or four washings it will scarcely hold together."

A few years preceding this period we have also legislative testimony of the extravagant use of linen in Ireland by the beaux and belles of that period. "It is the fashion," says a writer of that age, "for our fine lasses to put 13 or 14 yards of linen cloth into their smocks." The male dandies seem to have adopted the same fashion in the make of their under garments, for in 1537 we find "the High Court of Parliament" prescribing by statute, "That henceforward no more than seven yards of linen cloth shall be put into any smock or shirt, to be measured according to the King's standard." Whether any inspector, or commissioners, or other officers were appointed to carry this Act into execution, or whether they failed in the due performance of the delicate duties assigned them, does not appear. It seems, however, that the interference of the Legislature did little to diminish the professed evil, for in 1571 Campion writes, "The Irish wear linen shirts with wide hanging sleeves playted; 30 yards are little enough for one of them."

28 Hen. 8.

In the same year a law was made prohibiting the export of linen cloth, "save by merchants free of boroughs or incorporated towns;" an Act rather emanating from the rivalry of the town and country manufacturers, than called for by the exigencies of the public interests; for about this period the finer qualities of linen had become, from their general use in Ireland, an article of import, and considerable quantities were taken from France, in exchange for provisions, hides, &c. &c.

The exports of woollens from Ireland appeared to be increasing rapidly during the early part of the 17th century, and "English settlers of repute" located themselves in the country, and engaged in its manufactures with spirit and energy. About the middle of this century a great discouragement was given to Irish trade by the English Parliament, in an Act passed "against the exportation of certain Irish manufactures to the colonies."

15. Chas. 2, Anno 1663.

In 1695 the Irish House of Commons appointed a Select Committee to "prepare the heads of a Bill for the better making and regulating the Woollen Manufacture of the Kingdom." This proceeding, and the means subsequently adopted to improve the trade in Ireland, was received and viewed with great jealousy and acrimony by the English woollen manufacturers. The latter had long been treated with great favour by both the Court and the Legislature, and they completely succeeded in winning over the House of Lords to their side, by representations that the wool-growing and agricultural districts of England would be damnified by the prosperity of the woollen manufacture in Ireland. Influenced by this conviction, the Lords addressed King William on the 10th June 1698, praying, "That he would warn the Irish of the jealousy excited by the growth of their woollen manufacture, which might occasion prohibitory laws."

The king promised acquiescence; and taking immediate advantage of this weakness, their Lordships presented to him, on the 30th of the same month, a second address in the following terms:—"We, the Lords spiritual and temporall, in Parliament assembled, do humbly represent unto your Majesty, that the growing manufacture of cloth in Ireland, both by the cheapness of all sorts of necessaries for life, and goodness of materialls for making of all manner of cloth, doth invite your subjects of England, with their families and servants, to leave their

their habitations to settle there, to the increase of the woollen manufacture in Ireland; which makes your loyal subjects in this kingdom very apprehensive that the future growth of it may greatly prejudice the said manufacture here." To which address, the King replied—"*I will do all that in me lies to discourage the woollen manufacture in Ireland*, and encourage the linen manufacture, and to promote the trade of England."

The Irish Parliament ran hand in hand in this suicidal course with the British Government; and directly after imposed an additional export duty of 20 per cent. *ad valorem*, on Irish broad cloth, and 10 per cent. on all new drapery, frieze excepted.

The following year the English Parliament passed a law totally interdicting the exportation of Irish woollens, except to England and Wales, where, import duties previously existing, were as high as, in effect, to amount to prohibition.

29 June 1699.

The immediate consequences of this complete annihilation of the export woollen trade of Ireland, was the ruin of most, and the emigration of many of the manufacturers who had been engaged in it. Some of these passed into the Protestant states of Germany, where they founded manufactories for the celebrated Saxon cloths, which are the competitors of British cloth in the present day in many of the foreign markets; others, principally Catholics, emigrated to the north of Spain; and many, both Protestants and Catholics, to France, where they founded manufactories, at Rouen, and other places. The latter were warmly received and welcomed by Louis the Fourteenth, who guaranteed to the Protestants the free exercise of their religion, notwithstanding he had previously revoked the edict of Nantes.

It is a singular fact connected with the revocation of this edict, that at the very period the Irish woollen manufacturers were seeking shelter and protection on foreign shores, in consequence of the laws of William the Third, and carrying the seeds of ultimate manufacturing competition to the soils of their adoption, the revocation of this edict drove a great number of the French linen manufacturers to settle in Ireland, and thereby to lay the foundation, or more strictly accurately speaking, to foster, and improve, and promote the extension of a branch of trade which was destined to compete with the land from which they were exiled in the markets of the world.

Mr. Dobbs, an official writer who was employed in the Irish Customs Department at the beginning of the last century, says, in his work on Irish Trade, published in 1729, "Our exports increased in 1696, 1697, and 1698, but our imports did not rise in proportion, which occasioned the balance in our favour in 1698; being greater than ever it was in Ireland, except in 1715. This annual increase was occasioned by our falling into the woollen manufacture; the French refugees who settled with us at the same time laying the foundation of the linen manufacture; and it being also the succeeding year to the peace of Ryswick, Europe began to breathe after a heavy war, and trade to revive, which occasioned a brisker demand for Irish provisions."

Part 1, p. 6.

Part 1, p. 75.

The same author states, that "by a report made to William the Third, it appeared that French linen imported into England in 1697, was valued at 500,700 *l.*; and that in a report to the French King in 1676, the annual profit to France on linen sent to England was estimated at 400,000*l.*" Speaking of the efforts being made to encourage the use of Irish linen, he says, "through the exertions of the Belfast Cambric Company, linen scarves are beginning to be used at funerals, instead of French silk scarves." He notices, in illustration, the use of linen at the funeral of a distinguished Irishman who had just then died.

Part 1, p. 92.

To the revocation of the edict of Nantes other countries owe the origin or extension of manufactures among them. Many thousands of the refugees established themselves in England, and such of them as had been engaged in the silk trade fixed themselves in Spitalfields, where they introduced several new branches of the art. They received great encouragement from the British Government and the Legislature, and in 1692 were granted a patent giving them the exclusive right of manufacturing lustrings and *à la modes*, the description of silks then in greatest use. Shortly after the importation of European silk goods, and subsequently those of India and China, were prohibited by statute.

In the Report of Dr. Bowring * it is stated by Baron Chambrier, the President of the Council of Neufchatel, that these French refugees first introduced the art of lace-making

* On the Commerce and Manufactures of Switzerland.

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lace-making into that canton; and the silk and ribbon manufactures of others of the Swiss cantons are said to have obtained a great stimulus from the same sources.

The declaration of King William, that he would do all he could to discourage the woollen manufacture of Ireland, and to encourage the linen manufacture, spread great consternation and dismay in the southern provinces, which were the principal seats of the former manufacture. In Ulster, where the linen manufacture mainly flourished, the declaration was received, as may be supposed, with great satisfaction; and the King's sentiments, thus unequivocally expressed, being widely promulgated, it became fashionable to regard Ireland as the destined linen mart of the British empire.

From this period, thus influenced, many of the nobility and men of high rank in that country directed their attention to the extension of the manufacture. Great numbers of new looms were erected in the cottages of the peasantry, at the expense of the wealthy. In some instances they were presented as donations to the tenant; in others, he was called upon to defray the cost by easy periodical instalments.

It was, however, in the reign of the succeeding monarch that the most important measures were adopted in reference to this manufacture. In 1710 an Act was passed, whereby the produce of certain duties, granted by former Acts for the encouragement of the linen manufacture, were continued, and certain additional duties granted for the same purpose; and by which Act, "The Lord Lieutenant, or other Chief Governor of Ireland," was empowered "To appoint
9 Anne, c. 3. certain trustees for the disposal and management of the said duties, according to the trusts and powers hereinafter vested in them, to consist of an equal number of persons of each of the four provinces of the kingdom; and to settle and adjust such matters as may be most reasonable and conducive to the establishing and carrying on the said manufacture in this kingdom, and for preventing all abuses that may happen in the same."

The Duke of Ormonde was then Chief Governor of Ireland, and in pursuance of this statute, by warrant (dated 6th October 1711) he appointed the following persons as trustees for the respective provinces:—

ULSTER.
Earl of Mount Alexander.
Earl of Abercorn.
Viscount Mountjoy.
Viscount Massarene.
Lord Conway.
Edward Southwell, Esq.
Thomas Coote, Esq.
Charles O'Neill, Esq.
Joshua Dawson, Esq.
Dr. Marmaduke Coghill.
William Brownlow, Esq.
Samuel Waring, Esq.
Hawkins Magill, Esq.
Matthew Forde, Esq.
James Topham, Esq.
Charles Campbell, Esq.
Robert Clements, Esq.
Michael Ward, Esq.

CONNAUGHT.
Archbishop of Tuam.
Earl of Granard.
Viscount Lanesborough.
Baron of Dunkellin.
Major-General Hamilton.
Sir G. St. George, Bart.

CONNAUGHT—*continued.*
Sir A. Shaen, Bart.
Colonel Sandford.
John Eyre, Esq.
Wm. Gore, Esq.
Oliver St. George, Esq.
William Conolly, Esq.
Benj. Burton, Esq.
George Gore, Esq.
Alderman R. Gore.
David Kennedy, Esq.
John Stanton, Esq.
John French, Esq.

LEINSTER.
Lord Chancellor Phipps.
Archbishop of Dublin.
Earl of Kildare.
Earl of Drogheda.
Earl of Anglesea.
Viscount Fitzwilliam.
Baron of Howth.
Robert Doyne, Esq.
Robert Rochfort, Esq.
Charles Darling, Esq.
Samuel Dopping, Esq.
Sir R. Levinge, Bart.

LEINSTER—*continued.*
Sir Peirce Butler, Bart.
Sir William Fownes, Knight.
Stephen Ludlow, Esq.
Thomas Burgh, Esq.
A. Saunders, Esq.
John Pratt, Esq.

MUNSTER.
Earl of Inchiquin.
Earl of Barrymore.
Baron of Kerry.
Sir R. Cox, Bart.
Sir T. Southwell, Bart.
Sir John Percival, Bart.
Sir D. O'Bryen, Bart.
Sir Robert Maude, Bart.
Lieutenant-General Ingoldsby.
Lieutenant-Gen. Wm. Stewart.
Colonel William Ponsonby.
Francis Bernard, Esq.
William Burgh, Esq.
Robert Fitzgerald, Esq.
Edward Hoare, Esq.
Henry Vine, Esq.
George Matthews, Esq.
Arthur Bush, Esq.

These distinguished individuals comprised the first "Linen Board," as it was technically called, established in Ireland. With very few exceptions they were members of one or other of the Irish Houses of Parliament. I have set forth their names in full, that, at a glance, it may be observed how improbable it was that a Board composed of such aristocratic elements should be likely to possess or acquire that degree of fundamental and practical knowledge of the details of a common manufacture, which alone would be likely to qualify them either for its regulation or its improvement.

I trust to be able to show, by conclusive results, that the policy which created the power of interference, and the mode of its exercise, were alike unsound, unwise, and injurious; and that to the present day the linen trade of Ireland is suffering from their effects, and will continue to do so while a vestige remains of legislative thraldom.

The

Linen Manufacture of Ireland.

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The first efforts of the Linen Board were directed to the acquisition of a knowledge of the details of the trade they were appointed to regulate. The information they obtained, by returns and inquiries, from being derived through interested sources, was frequently deceptive and contradictory. It seems, however, that the Board soon received the impression, that few persons engaged in the manufacture were free from the taint of using false measures, and of resorting to unworthy means for the purpose of deceiving purchasers in the quality of the cloth. After making many inefficient "regulations" on these subjects, they obtained an Act in 1719, authorising their appointment of public officers called lappers,—a name then common in the trade, because such persons measured, and lapped or folded up the linen in the form in which it was offered for sale. The Act runs thus:—"And for the more effectual preventing of frauds and abuses in making and bleaching of linen cloth, and bringing the same into better repute, be it enacted by the authority aforesaid, that it shall and may be lawful to and for the trustees appointed for encouraging the hempen and flaxen manufactures of this kingdom, or any five or more of them, to license and appoint such fit and proper person or persons, in such places of this kingdom as they shall judge most convenient, to view, examine, and measure all and every such piece or pieces of linen cloth as shall be produced and offered to him and them; and if such cloth appear to be merchantable, and pursuant to the good laws for regulating the linen manufactures in force in this kingdom, then, and not otherwise, such person or persons licensed to be lappers as aforesaid, shall and may lap and make up the same, and mark thereon the number of yards such piece containeth in length, and seal or stamp both ends thereof with the name of such lapper, and the county in which he resides, or such other impression as the said trustees shall think fit and appoint; for all which such lapper shall and may demand and take the sum of two-pence, and no more, unless he beetle the same, and then one penny more over and above the said two-pence."

6 Geo. 1, c. 7, s. 7.

The Act then details the different duties of the lappers, and attaches penalties for every variation from the rules there laid down for the government of the trade. The Board appears in this year to have appointed two classes of lappers, one called public lappers, under the above Act, and the other private lappers; by what authority, unless it be the general power of making regulations, does not appear. Their minute runs thus:—"If any one who keeps a bleach-yard, and gives the Board satisfaction that he is qualified to be a lapper, and applies for a stamp and commission, they will appoint him, provided that he lap up and stamp no cloths but such as are bleached in his own bleach-yard, except there be no public lapper within six miles of him."*

10 Geo. 1, c. 2, s. 1.

Four years after another Act gave to the lappers a further power over "all flaxen and hempen cloth made of high white yarn," thus extending their authority from the bleached cloth to that made with bleached yarn. The same Act introduced the important regulation, that "From and after the 25th March 1724 no unbleached cloths, called green cloths, shall be brought to any market or fair, or shall be sold or exposed to sale otherwise than in the folds, and no way tied."

Previous to this enactment one of the frauds of the trade was to bring the linen to market so rolled up and tied as to preclude the buyer from a fair opportunity of examining its quality. It seems adverse to common sense that a man should be expected to buy "a pig in a poke," or to give as much for a piece of cloth uninspected as he would do when satisfied of its quality; the weavers, however, would not concede the opportunity of effectual inspection, until constrained to do so by the Legislature.

7 Geo. 2, c. 10.

Ten years after another Act placed "all green or unbleached linen," for the first time, under the same regulations with respect to measuring and stamping as those previously existing respecting the white linen. The lappers of white linens were authorized to lap the green linen also, the latter being permitted to be sold only in open folds.

In 1736 a committee of the Board was appointed to consider whether it might be proper to continue the private lappers, that is, the persons who were authorized to lap and stamp their own linen. The committee reported: "We have met and considered the same, and as we apprehended that great inconveniences may arise from permitting private lappers to lap their own cloths, we are of opinion that no more private lappers be appointed." This recommendation, probably the most sensible

* MSS. Minutes, vol 3, p. 307.

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sensible that the minutes of the Board show on record, appears to have been entirely disregarded. The system of private as well as public lappers continued in full operation, and men were allowed, and expected to do it honestly, to certify to the quantities and qualities of their own linens.

In 1745 Mr. Anthony Foster, who had previously been appointed counsel to the Linen Board, and who afterwards became Chief Baron of the Exchequer, presented to Parliament a Bill for consolidating the previous provisions and penalties respecting the stamping and measuring of linens bleached and unbleached. It passed with little opposition, but was totally ineffectual in punishing or preventing the gross frauds throughout the trade to which the lappers had become, almost without exception, parties. In 1749 another Act was passed, giving power of recovery by civil bill of "all fines and penalties for preventing the many abuses committed by weavers, bleachers and lappers." * This was found alike ineffectual, and two more Acts were passed † on the subject, about as useful their predecessors. Almost the entire business of the Board was the investigation of complaints against their own officers. Their records for 30 years together exhibit a numerous list of them fined and dismissed, and others appointed in their places, the latter becoming in a few weeks fit subjects for similar punishment. The Irish Parliament took the matter up, and appointed a select committee to examine into the subject. Their report was merely confirmatory of that which everybody knew to be the case. The frivolous and vexatious interference to which the trade was exposed, and the grossly corrupt and partial manner in which the officers of the Board performed the duties assigned them, at length became so insupportable to the weavers as to lead to open violence against the law. They refused to submit to the regulation by which they were required to expose their brown linen for sale in open folds, and compelled the Board to submit. It was done in the following bombastic style:—"Resolved, that the laws relative to the exposing brown linens to sale, crisped, or in open folds, shall be put into execution as soon as the nature of the trade will admit." This indefinite postponement of one of the regulations induced the weavers to believe that by showing the same degree of resistance they could get rid of the sealing altogether. They therefore despatched ringleaders round the different weaving towns and villages to urge and prepare the great body of the weavers for a public manifestation of their determination.

19 Geo. 2, c. 6.

* 23 Geo. 2, c. 6.
† 31 Geo. 2, c. 17, & 33 Geo. 2, c. 5.

Lisburn, in the county Antrim, then the chief market for fine linens, was fixed on as the place of meeting. The placards, convening the intended meeting, were in general well worded, some of them highly amusing. The Dromore proclamation was couched in the following terms: "Dromore, 12th May, 1762.—This is to give notice to all gentlemen, manufacturers and weavers, to meet in a body like valiant and honest men, at Lisburn, on Tuesday next, that we may oppose the unprecedented and oppressive means which are to be used against us by the merchants, and to bring them to reason by fair means; and if that will not do, other means must be used. Let us, like Demetrius and his craftsmen, stand valiantly up for our Diana, for our craft is in danger."

On the appointed day the weavers met in great force. A Mr. Williamson, a manufacturer who was accused of having devised the brown seals, narrowly escaped with his life, by climbing over walls and the tops of houses. Many other drapers were beaten and maimed, and sworn against the use of seals. The Earl of Hilsborough, a trustee, was also attacked and beaten, and several houses were broken open, in search of persons supposed to be friendly to the proposed restrictions. The rioting ceased with the close of day.

The brown seals were to come into use on the 11th of August. The Board postponed their introduction for three months; but that this departure from their previously-expressed intentions should not be deemed to have been in any degree influenced or produced by the riots, they declared at the same time the postponement was announced, that, "being thoroughly convinced of the absolute necessity of having brown linens sealed before they are sold, or exposed to sale, they are determined to carry that measure into execution as soon as a sufficient number of seals can be provided, which they have ordered to be prepared with the utmost expedition."

The towns of Banbridge, Newry, Lisburn, Loughbrickland and many others, addressed the Board, disowning all participation in the riotous proceedings at the Lisburn market. That from Lisburn itself is remarkable for its contrition: "May it please your Honors,—We should have been among the first to express our sincerest gratitude and thankfulness for the happy regulations you have made

made in our trade, had not grief and shame for the late enormities committed in and about this place withheld us from presuming to lift up our faces before you and the public. When we consider that it was here, and here alone, where the laws you had ordered to be enacted were so madly opposed; when we plainly see (as we now do) the benefits intended for us by the same; but above all, when we reflect on the manner in which a truly noble and right honourable member of your Board, the great friend our of trade, was treated amongst us, our faces are not only covered with shame, but our hearts are penetrated with concern and grief. And when we also consider the great good that was then a-doing, and which, notwithstanding our unworthiness, has since been done for us; and the lenity and mercy that has since also been shown in return for indignities and base ingratitude, we are so confounded that we know not what to say, nor how to address ourselves to your Honors. Suffer us, however, humbly to assure your Honors that it was only the lowest and most ignorant of our body, who by being deceived and abused by wicked falsehoods propagated among us, were brought to be concerned in those shameful disturbances, in order, as they weakly believed and imagined, to save themselves and their families from oppression and ruin."

The Board seem to have taken courage from these addresses, and to have enforced the sealing of brown linen previous to its sale.

The trade became, if possible, more unsettled than ever, and it is stated that early in 1763, "A general opinion had spread itself among the members of the trade, that some new consolidating bill was necessary, which should collect and amend the provisions of former Acts, rejecting such as were deemed inapplicable to existing circumstances, and strengthening such of them as ought to be retained *.

In this opinion, it is added, "the Linen Board cordially concurred," and upon the suggestion of one of their most sensible members, Mr. Anthony Foster, they came to the wise resolution of requesting the principal members of the linen trade "to consider of, and prepare such hints to lay before them, as might appear conducive to the benefit and further improvement of the linen manufacture."

Meetings on this subject were convened in the principal towns, with an intimation that but two delegates from any one place could be admitted. That of Hillsborough was peculiarly to the point: "No more than two persons will be admitted, which nobody is to take ill, as no business can be done where there's too many people."

The judicious invitation of the Board not only obtained them much valuable information, and many able papers on the linen manufacture of Ireland, but teemed the press with pamphlets and other publications on the subject†.

During all this "wordy war" Mr. Foster, the Board's counsel, was in constant communication with the trade, not merely through its delegates, but with any member of it from whom any information was likely to be obtained. He was instructed to "collect, arrange, discuss, and digest" the several suggestions offered him, a task he appears to have performed with great diligence. On the 12th October 1763, he obtained leave from the Irish Parliament to bring in a new Bill "For the better regulation of the linen and hempen manufactures."

The draft of the Bill was immediately after officially submitted to the Linen Board, by whom it was often and anxiously discussed. Their minutes of the 3d February 1764 say, "The Board having finished the reading of the new Linen

* Minutes, Linen Board, 1763.

† Among the most interesting were—

1. A review of the evils that have prevailed in the Linen Manufacture of Ireland.—Wilson, Dame-st.

2. Papers collected and seriously deliberated upon by a number of linen drapers in and near Lisburn and Belfast; humbly presented to the Trustees of the Linen Manufacture, as materials for a Linen Bill, &c.—Second edition. March 1763. Belfast, H. & R. Joy.

3. Observations on the several matters offered to the Linen Board as materials for a Linen Bill, particularly on a paper called "Observations on the Linen Trade," together with some humble hints with regard to the proposed amendment of our linen laws, by the linen weavers and manufacturers of the towns of Belfast, Lisburn, Hillsborough, and country adjacent.—Dublin, Peter Wilson, 1763.

4. A brief state of the debate concerning the sealing of Brown Linens, and exposing them to sale in open folds, wherein is contained everything that has been offered to the public against those regulations, together with answers to the same.—Dublin, P. Wilson, Dame-street, 1763.

5. Observations on the Linen Trade, humbly submitted to the consideration of the Trustees of the Linen Manufacture, by the drapers of Belfast.

6. Copies of several memorials presented to the Linen Board by the merchants of Dublin, London, Bristol, Liverpool, Chester, and different parts of England, concerning the late regulations of the Board, and the present design of making a new body of laws for the better order and regulation of the Linen Manufacture of Ireland.—Dublin, P. Wilson, 1763.

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Linen Bill, and agreed to all the clauses therein, as they now stand, ordered the said Bill to be left with the Clerk of the House of Commons." The Bill was presented to the House four days afterwards by Mr. Foster, and after undergoing some amendments in the committee, was, on the 24th of the same month, directed "to be transmitted into Great Britain."

The Bill having, as the Board fondly imagined, lulled the discordant elements of Irish opposition, its triumphant passage through the Privy Council was regarded almost as a matter of course; the fact was, however, otherwise. The Earl of Northumberland, the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, transmitted to the Board a letter that had been addressed to him by Mr. Sharp, then Secretary to the Privy Council, stating "that the linen merchants and factors for foreign linens in London, were preparing to oppose the clause in the new Linen Bill lately sent over, which ascertains the breadth of Irish linens, when white;" and desiring "to be furnished with such reasons as may be proper for supporting said clause."

2d April 1764.

A special meeting was convened for the next day, to take his Excellency's letter into consideration; and as the minutes of that meeting embody the reasons on which is founded one of the most important regulations of the linen trade, in full force at the present hour, and to which I shall have occasion hereafter to advert, I deem it necessary to transcribe them at length.

Linen Board, April 3, 1764.

The Right honourable Earl of Moira, in the Chair.

Earl of Tyrone, Earl of Carrick, Viscount Joscelyn, N. Clements, Esq., Right hon. A. Trevor, Sir A. Acheson, Bart., William Sharman, Esq., Edward Carly, Esq., G. L. Corry, Esq., Wm. Brownlow, Esq., Abraham Creighton, Esq.

The Board having met pursuant to order, to consider Mr. Sharp's letter to his Excellency the Lord Lieutenant, relative to the clause in the new Linen Bill for ascertaining the different breadths of linens, agreed to the following address to his Excellency relative thereto:—

May it please your Excellency,

We are highly sensible of your Excellency's great goodness in communicating Mr. Sharp's letter to us, on the opposition which is likely to arise to the clause in the Linen Bill for ascertaining the different breadths of linens.

We have carefully considered that letter, and cannot but express our surprise that any opposition should be made to that clause in London, because it not only underwent a long and full deliberation here, and was made agreeable to the united application and testimony of the most considerable dealers and manufacturers in this country, but was also grounded on repeated applications from the factors and agents for linens in England, to their employers here, and some even to this Board.

We have upon this occasion re-consulted the principal linen dealers of this city, and have with their assistance re-collected the reasons which moved this Board to propose that clause; and we do humbly pray your Excellency, that you will be pleased to direct those reasons to be transmitted to Mr. Sharp, which we humbly hope will be satisfactory to His Majesty and the Lords of the Council.

It has been found by long experience that the breadths, as expressed in the clause, are well adapted to the several purposes of consumption of those linens, hitherto distinguished by the denomination of yard-wides, seven-eighth-wides, and three-quarter-wides, and have proved most agreeable to the purchasers both at home and abroad, and that the nearer our linens have been kept to those breadths, the more saleable they have been found; and it is well known that the foreign linens with which ours have to contend, are made as near as possible to those breadths.

If manufacturers are left entirely at liberty to make their linens of any breadth they think proper, it will introduce a general confusion into the trade in this respect, which at this time is known to be too much the case; and unless it be remedied by law, it is to be apprehended that all distinguishing denominations in time will be lost, and persons abroad will find that they are not to expect their orders sent to this kingdom for any particular species of linens, to be executed with that certainty and exactness which they are sure of experiencing in the linens of other countries.

Indeed it is likely to become impracticable here to execute such orders, as there will be found to be a great variety of breadths in the same parcel of linens, which will

will lay the buyer under a necessity of purchasing much larger quantities than he wants, in order to pick out a sufficient number of the breadths required, in consequence of which he will be much encumbered. Linen Manufacture of Ireland.

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Before the law for ascertaining the breadths of yard-wide linen of 1400 and upwards took place, we had almost lost the fine trade by the breadths being reduced in such a manner as rendered them quite unsaleable abroad; in consequence of that law our fine linens soon gained reputation. The good effect of this law fully evinces the necessity of extending it to linens of different breadths, and to those under the set of 1400, which will be the means, in some degree, of restoring the credit of this branch of our manufacture, which for some years past has greatly declined, being found, on account of its narrowness, unfit for printing, which is the great consumption of those kinds; and as seven-eighth-wide linens are principally consumed in shirting for the middle class of people, any reduction of that breadth very much unfits them for those purposes. By the manner in which they are at present made, great losses have been sustained, and foreigners have got a preference of us by keeping up to a proper breadth.

As linens under the denomination of three-quarters-wide are chiefly for exportation to the British plantations, if particular care be not taken to support their breadths, this branch of trade will be in danger of being lost, because they will be thereby excluded from the bounty; and it is well known that more than one-half of them are at present obliged to be sold at an under-rate for home consumption, for not being of the proper breadth, many of them coming to market not twenty-five inches wide, to the great discouragement of this article, and loss to the kingdom in general; all which is humbly submitted to your Excellency,

By your Excellency's most dutiful and obedient servants,
The Trustees of the Linen Manufacture.

(signed by order) *Bro. Newburgh.*

Dublin Castle, 3d April 1764.

To his Excellency, Hugh, Earl of Northumberland,
Lord Lieutenant of Ireland.

The Bill ultimately passed the Privy Council, was returned to the Irish House of Commons on the 7th May 1764, and on the 12th of that month received the Royal assent. It became the Act of 3 Geo. 3, c. 34.

Under this statute the trustees first derived the power of appointing "sealmasters" of brown linen, and of regulating their duties. The lappers, except of white linen, were superseded by these officers. Early the following year, they acted upon a former resolution, of granting brown linen seals to manufacturers, well recommended, and numerous appointments were very indiscreetly made of such persons.

From 1765 to 1777, there appears to have been no proceeding of great importance at the Linen Board, affecting the brown sealmasters; but regulation after regulation was issued, to control and guard against the frauds of the remaining lappers. The domestic troubles of the trade were, however, succeeded by others of a more formidable nature; the demand for the staple manufacture so decreased in 1773–4, that a Committee of the House of Commons, appointed to inquire into the subject, reported that "Emigration had become general throughout Ireland, owing to the decline of the linen manufacture." In a communication made to the Committee by the principal linen dealers of Derry and Newtown-Limavaddy, it is stated—

"As to the exact number of looms now idle in this country, it is not an easy matter to ascertain, as the manufacture is carried on through all the different parts of the country; and it would take a considerable time and trouble to go through the whole, so as to return a correct list; but it is our opinion, on the most exact calculation we can make, that about one-third of our weavers have been idle these twelve months past. Some have gone to labouring work, others to America, and the rest begging."

The exports of linen which,

In 1771	-	were	-	25,376,808 yards
1773	-	were	-	18,450,700 —
1774	-	only	-	16,916,674 —

showing a falling off of very nearly one-third.

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The export of yarn diminished,

From 1771	- - - -	34,166 cwts.
1774	- - - -	29,194 —

The trade rallied slightly during the next three years, when it again became increasingly depressed; and in 1781, the exports amounted only to 14,947,265 yards.

Inquiries of an extensive nature, as to the origin or causes of the existing distress, were instituted, both by a Committee of the Linen Board, and a Select Committee of the Irish Parliament. The former embraced almost every thing connected with the constitution and management of the Board; it was open to the complaints of English buyers against Irish linens, for being injured by lime in bleaching, and for being otherwise irregular; and, of course, included the department of the sealmasters, in which irregularities and frauds, as great as ever, were found to exist. The results of the inquiry were reported to the Board by Mr. John Foster, one of their body, afterwards Lord Oriel, and, as usual, tinkering legislation was again resorted to. A new Bill received the Royal assent on the 4th May 1782, imposing severer penalties for dereliction of duty on sealmasters and lappers, and empowering the trustees to create a new class of public officers called inspectors. The latter were authorised to fine or seize all linens and yarns not made, or measured, or offered for sale, strictly conformable to the regulations of the Board.

21 & 22 Geo. 3, c. 35.

The Irish Parliament assumed a more lofty tone, and claimed "the right of Ireland to a free trade, subject only to the control of its own legislature."* The British Parliament, *pari passu*, passed a law prohibiting the importation of "chequed, striped, painted, stained, or dyed linens, of the manufacture of Ireland," and granting bounties on the exportation of such linens, of the manufacture of England; a duty was also imposed on the importation of Irish sail-cloth. The Scotch, from their legislative union with England, obtained advantages for this manufacture, of which they so aptly availed themselves, that their linens stamped for sale amounted, in 1783, to near 17 million yards. It is desirable to bear this fact in mind, because the impression prevails to a considerable extent, that the competition of the Scotch linen trade with that of Ireland, is of more modern growth. I shall by-and-by show when this competition began really to assume an imposing form, and under what circumstances the linen manufacture of Scotland has been enabled so rapidly, recently, to outrun its early rival.

It would be mere repetition to detail, year after year, the complaints that were made to the Board of the conduct of their sealmasters. The trade appears to have been vexed and harassed in the highest degree, and the dismissal of one officer for peculation or fraud, was but the invariable prelude of the same result to his successor. In 1798, the Board directed their "three inspectors-general" to "report their opinion upon the best means of correcting the frauds of brown sealmasters throughout the kingdom."

These officers reported, that "after communicating with a number of the principal gentlemen of the linen trade," they were prepared to submit,

"That all the brown seals should be called in on a certain day; that every manufacturer who employs four looms or upwards, be allowed a seal upon giving the usual security, with the addition of a penalty not to seal any linens but

* Never were the hopes of a people more signally disappointed. Time proved that a right of commerce was not sufficient to improve the condition of the country, for the mass of the people continued in wretchedness, and the manufactories established were inadequately sustained. The Irish did not seem to be aware that England owed her prosperity chiefly to a home trade, created by the agricultural classes, made comfortable by the reactive tendency of the poor laws, and orderly and provident habits, which induced the collection of capital. The agricultural classes of Ireland were consequently neglected, and her Parliament, overlooking the immediate importance of having a good home trade, set about the establishment of manufactures on the vicious monopoly principle of England, giving bounties on exports, and imposing heavy taxes on imports. In addition to these, they advanced public loans to encourage speculators, and the journals of the Irish House of Commons present many curious examples of the impolicy of using such means for such an object. In 1781 loans were advanced to Captain Brooke of Kildare, Baron Hamilton of Balbriggan, Mr. Hardman of Drogheda, and other persons, all of whom were engaged in establishing manufactories, but had not sufficient capital of their own. On the 3d November 1783, Captain Brooke had a petition presented for a further loan of 40,000*l.* On the 28th of the same month 25,000*l.* was granted him on the condition of his employing 2,000 of the distressed operatives of Dublin for 10 years.—*Stanley, Cloncurry Prize Essay*, p. 136.
It may be added, that the Captain was ruined by the adventure, and returned to India.—*R. M. M.*

but of his own manufacture; that a public sealmaster be appointed to every market town, who is to give not less than 400 *l.* security for the performance of his duty as sealmaster; his seal to be of a different form to that issued to a manufacturer. According to the quantity of linen usually sold at the market where such public sealmaster presides, he may take any number of seals out in his name to expedite the sealing, he to be accountable for them. This, with the use of measuring wheels, which are now practised at Sligo, Strabane, and Derry, with success, would prevent any delay to the manufacturer, and, we conceive, put a stop to the frauds now complained of."

The Board adopted the principal part of their inspector-generals' Report, and new seals were issued, confining the sealing of linens to market-towns, and "to persons who had a knowledge of the trade, but who should be restricted from following it."

This regulation necessarily excluded the manufacturers; and so strong were the remonstrances addressed to the Board on this subject, that, within 12 months, they cancelled their own arrangement of the previous year, whereby seals were denied to manufacturers, and ran to the opposite extreme of granting them "to any person who, in addition to the usual recommendation from the trade, could also be recommended by a trustee, and be able to give the required security."

Pursuant to this regulation, seals were again demanded in great numbers, and were issued almost indiscriminately. The minutes of the Board, from this period down to 1821, present one unvarying record of complaints, and investigations of the conduct of sealmasters: they were, if possible, still more numerous than heretofore. On the 6th of February 1821, the Board resolved—

Minutes, 1821.

"1. That all proceedings for carrying into effect the appointments lately made by this Board, of persons to act as sole sealmasters, or public officers for the measuring and stamping of all brown linens, sold at public market, in the counties of Down and Armagh, be suspended until further orders.

"2. That this Board has been induced to appoint officers of this description for the counties of Down and Armagh, not less through a wish of assimilating the mode of measuring and stamping the brown linen of those two counties to that which exists in other counties of the Province of Ulster, where great public advantage has been said to result from such appointments, than from what appeared to be the wishes of the trade themselves, as expressed in sundry memorials and other papers addressed to this Board.

"3. That as many representations of a contrary import have been lately received upon this subject, purporting to come from the trade, it becomes expedient to send down our secretary to the Province of Ulster, as soon as his other duties will permit, for the purpose of inquiring into the manner in which the measuring and stamping of brown linen is conducted in each county of that province, and whether any, and what irregularities exist therein; and of collecting, in such way as shall be directed, the actual opinions and wishes of the trade in each county with respect thereto, as far as it be practicable to ascertain them; and for obtaining the fullest information upon every part of this subject, and reporting the same to this Board."

In pursuance of the latter resolution, the secretary visited almost every linen market in the Province of Ulster, at each of which he convened meetings of the trade, and gathered, as accurately as he could, their prevailing sentiments. These, as may be supposed, were frequently incongruous and contradictory. The inquiry ended by a recommendation from the secretary,—

1. That public sealmasters should be appointed for each market, and that all brown seals entrusted to other persons should be recalled.

2. That recommendations of persons to fill such appointments should exclusively emanate from the Linen Committees of Counties.

3. That the district of each seal-master should be sufficiently large to make the office "not beneath the acceptance of persons of credit."

4. That the law requiring all linen to be measured and stamped, before being exposed for sale, should be strictly enforced.

5. That a register should be kept of the number and description of pieces stamped by each sealmaster.

6. That certain "principal manufacturers" should be allowed seals for their own linens only.

At this time there were 356 sealmasters in Ulster only; and the personal

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inquiries of the secretary clearly established the fact, that the far greater portion of them were intent only on personal advantage.

While fraud and chicanery appeared the all-prevading influences operating throughout the various public markets of the kingdom, evils of another, but equally injurious nature, marked the proceedings of the Board in its executive character. They were empowered to pay bounties on the manufacture and exportation of linen to foreign countries, and to grant premiums and encouragements of various kinds for whatever had an alleged tendency to improve or increase the manufacture.* Claims to a large amount were over and over again as improperly made, as they were negligently and unwarrantably granted. I subjoin, in illustration, a few of the entries of expenditure in the year 1810, and an extract from the 36th Report of the Commissioners of Public Accounts of Ireland.

	£.	s.	d.
Sir Thomas Fitzgerald, for manufacturing 112,782 yards of duck, at 2 *d.* -	937	17	–
Julius Besnard, for spinning 73,054 yards of sail-cloth, at 2 *d.* - - -	608	15	8
P. and J. Besnard, for manufacturing 50,264 yards of duck, at 2 *d.* - -	418	17	4
James B. Sullivan, for erecting 1,040 spindles - - - - -	1,560	–	–
John Blundell, for erecting 1,860 ditto - - - - - -	2,790	–	–
Pat Purcell, for his invention of a machine for breaking and scutching hemp and flax - - - - - - - - - - - - -	28	8	9
Charles Mead, a premium for scutching 1,827 stone of flax, at 3 *d.* - -	22	16	9
Samuel Moore (and others) for making looms with fly-stays, for the use of female weavers - - - - - - - - - - -	1,069	5	6
Thomas Sinclair, for branding 656 looms, at 2 *s.* - - - - -	65	12	–
Pat Mullock, for 12 sets of hatchels - - - - - - -	75	1	5
Machines for breaking hemp and flax (to individuals enumerated) - -	719	–	–
Charles Duffin, inspector-general, for travelling expenses to England, to procure hemp farmers - - - - - - - - - -	113	15	–
English hemp farmers, for travelling expenses, &c., in visiting and instructing gentlemen and farmers, in different counties in Ireland, from the time of sowing hemp till fit for the hatchel - - - - - - -	624	13	9

Under the head of "State of the Balance," are the following items:—

Total to be refunded and accounted for—			
Mr. Duffin (inspector-general) - - - - - - - - -	1,297	6	10½
Due by the architect - - - - - - - - -	127	8	10½
Due by the late secretary - - - - - - - - -	13,287	1	5
Due by the inspector of Tyrone - - - - - - - -	63	14	–
Loss by a clerk, through fraud and forgery, for which he stood his trial -	2,621	6	5

Extract from Minutes of Meeting of Linen Board, 19th June 1810.

Flax-seed Bounties.—Sundry further communications which were received since 28th May, relative to fraudulent attempts to obtain money unduly from the Board by fictitious claims for flax-seed bounty, were presented and read, &c.

Ordered, That the county inspectors be again cautioned to use the strictest diligence in the examination of every claim for flax-seed bounty, &c.

Ordered, That no money be issued to any officer employed in the payment of these bounties, on account of salary, incidents, or for any other purposes, until the balances which shall appear respectively due by them at foot of their final account with the trustees, in respect to these bounties, be paid into the bank of the treasurer, &c.

Extract of Minutes of 30th July 1810.

Ordered—"That the inspector of the King's County be instructed not to pay any claim for flax-seed bounty, if the least cause of suspicion exists in respect to the signature of the magistrate annexed thereto, without previously resorting to the magistrate himself."

The inspector-general had previously reported, that in this county it was supposed

* One of the many pernicious regulations of the Linen Board was to require all yarn to be reeled in a particular manner, the effect of which was to exclude the use of foreign linen yarn in Ireland. This effect, it was presumed by many, was intended, under the absurd idea that it would operate as an encouragement on the growth of flax in Ireland; but the regulation proved so vexatious to the Irish growers, as in reality to diminish the growth at home. Prices consequently were raised in Ireland, where they bore a disproportionate rate to those paid by the Barnsley and Dundee manufacturers, who availed themselves extensively of the foreign reeled yarn, and also of the mill spun. These circumstances, coupled with the removal of legislative restrictions on the mode of manufacturing, almost annihilated the Drogheda trade, and greatly increased that of the Scotch and English competitors.—(*Vide* some interesting evidence on this subject in the Irish Poor Inquiry; Appendix C, Part 1; Report of G. C. Lewis, and A. P. Aylmer, Esquires.)

posed the magistrates' signatures to flax-seed bounty claims were frequently forged.

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Extract from the Thirty-sixth Report of the Commissioners of Account of Ireland.—(Ordered, by The House of Commons, to be printed, 30th April 1810.)

"In our former reports we have repeatedly observed upon the great inattention of the trustees to their money concerns, and the improper negligence of the officers employed under them. The nature of the disallowances we have found necessary to make in the present account, amounting to 1,619*l.* 14*s.* 1*d.* has called our attention again most particularly to this subject.

* * * * * * *

The trustees are too numerous, too fluctuating; have too great a variety of opinions, and frequently counteract each other. They seldom attend in proper numbers; they frequently, in our opinion, act in direct opposition to law, as appears on the face of their Minutes, particularly in the most essential points of making grants and paying money.

* * * * * * *

The inspector-general, who is the first officer under the trustees, appears to have been very negligent; and yet to him alone seems to be committed by the trustees, the whole management of this great establishment. They generally take for granted that his representations are correct, and, on the sole authority of his signature, or representation, pay annually large sums of money; yet to his errors are owing most of the inaccuracies of this account.

* * * * * * *

We find that the quantity of hemp-seed purchased in England was about 1,460*l.* worth; of this about one-fourth was sold, and the rest was distributed gratis; and it appears from the returns to us, that what was sold was mostly sold to the poor, and what was distributed gratis, in general, was to the opulent.

* * * * * * *

These, as well as other evils arising from negligent superintendence, we are of opinion cannot easily be remedied under the present construction of the Board of Trustees, and conduct of their officers, &c. &c.

Richard Magenis, (L. S.)
Maurice Cane, (L. S.)
Account Office, 10th March 1810. *H. S. King.* (L. S.)

In 1825 further legislation was resorted to, and a general purification was made of the almost innumerable Acts which had been crowded on the statute book.

The 6th Geo. 4, c. 122 (passed 5th July 1825) repealed—

1. The 3 Geo. 3, c. 34, intituled, "An Act for the better regulation of the Linen and Hempen Manufactures."
2. The 5 Geo. 3, c. 9, intituled, "An Act for explaining and amending the laws relating to the Flaxen and Hempen Manufactures."
3. The 13 & 14 Geo. 3, c. 21, intituled, "An Act for amending an Act passed in the 3d year of his Majesty's reign, intituled, "An Act for the better regulation of the Linen and Hempen Manufactures."
4. The 17 & 18 Geo. 3, c. 21, intituled, "An Act to explain and amend an Act passed in the 3d year of the reign of his present Majesty, intituled, "An Act for the better regulation of the Linen and Hempen Manufacture."
5. The 17 & 18 Geo. 3, c. 33, intituled, "An Act for preventing the cutting or destroying of plain, stained or printed Linens, Cottons, Lawns or Muslins, or any other manufactured goods."
6. The 21 & 22 Geo. 3, c. 35, intituled, "An Act for prohibiting the use of Lime in Bleaching, regulating Sealmasters of Linens, encouraging the home manufacture of Ashes for bleaching use; enlarging and rendering more commodious the Linen Hall in the city of Dublin, and other purposes therein mentioned."
7. The 23 & 24 Geo. 3, c. 53, intituled, "An Act for further promoting the Linen and Hempen Manufactures."
8. The 26 Geo. 3, c. 29, intituled, "An Act for granting the sum of 4,000*l.* to the Trustees of the Linen Manufacture, and for the purposes therein mentioned."
9. The 27 Geo. 3, c. 18, intituled, "An Act for granting the sum of 400,000*l.* to the Trustees of the Linen Manufacture, and for the purposes therein mentioned."
10. The 27 Geo. 3, c. 20, intituled, "An Act to extend the powers given by law to certain persons of making leases of lands for the purposes of building and carrying on the Linen Manufacture."
11. The 28 Geo. 3, c. 8, intituled, "An Act to promote the Linen and Hempen Manufacture by increasing the supply of Irish flax-seed, and encouraging the export of Linens and Sail-cloth,

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Sail-cloth, and for granting to His Majesty, his heirs, and successors the duties therein mentioned."

12. The 29 Geo. 3, c. 34, intituled, "An Act for granting the sum of 4,000*l.* to the Trustees of the Linen Manufacture, and for other purposes."

13. The 30 Geo. 3, c. 26, intituled, "An Act for granting the sum of 4000 *l.* to the Trustees of the Linen Manufacture, and for other purposes."

14. The 31 Geo. 3, c. 14, intituled, "An Act for amending the laws respecting the Linen and Hempen Manufactures."

15. The 33 Geo. 3. c. 12, intituled, "An Act for granting the sum of 4000 *l.* to the Trustees of the Linen and Hempen Manufactures, and for other purposes."

16. The 34 Geo. 3. c. 17, intituled, "An Act for a more effectual redress in cases of fraudulent or damaged Linens, and for enforcing County Inspectors to an effectual execution of their duties, and otherwise promoting the Linen and Hempen Manufactures."

17. The 36 Geo. 3, c. 47, intituled, "An Act to amend certain parts of the laws respecting the Linen and Hempen Manufactures."

18. The 37 Geo. 3, c. 61, intituled, "An Act for the further regulation of the Linen and Hempen Manufactures."

19. The 38 Geo. 3, c. 44, intituled, "An Act to amend the laws for promoting the Linen and Hempen Manufactures."

20. The 44 Geo. 3, c. 69, intituled, "An Act to amend the laws for regulating the Linen Manufactures of Ireland."

21. The 55 Geo. 3, c. 25, intituled, "An Act for the better regulation of the Manufacture of Brown Linens in Ireland."

22. The 4 Geo. 4, c. 90, intituled, "An Act to regulate the Linen and Hempen Manufactures of Ireland."

Twenty-two statutes were thus, at once, put *hors de combat*. The work of legislative slaughter did not however terminate here; the same destructive statute declared, that "from and after the 1st day of July" following, that is, 1826, The 42 Geo. 3, c. 75, intituled, "An Act to amend the laws for the better regulation of the Linen Manufacture of Ireland," the 44 Geo. 3, c. 42, intituled, "An Act to amend an Act made in the 42d year of His Majesty, to amend the laws for the better regulation of the Linen Manufacture in Ireland," and the 50 Geo. 3, c. 82, intituled, "An Act to amend the laws relative to the sale of Flax Seed and Hemp Seed in Ireland," should also cease and determine. This Act continued the power of the Trustees or Linen Board, though in a somewhat modified degree, giving them authority "to settle and adjust such matters as they shall think most expedient for the establishing and carrying on the said manufacture; and for preventing all frauds and abuses that may happen in the same, or any branch thereof." It empowered them to apply any sums which might be appropriated or granted for the use of the linen manufacture "in such manner as they shall think proper;" vested in them the appointment of "all such officers, servants, and persons as shall appear to the said trustees necessary," and with "such allowances and salaries as to the said trustees shall seem suitable." The duties and authority of the inspectors-general were fully laid down and defined, and the appointment of local "inspectors of linen and yarn" permitted, "on the recommendation of the linen bleachers, or a majority of them" resident in any particular district.

6 Geo. 4, s. 2. c. 122.

Ibid, s. 5.

The trustees were only *not authorised* to apply any sums of money "in the payment of any premium, bounty, or allowance on any fabric of the linen manufacture which is or shall be entitled to any bounty upon the exportation thereof from any part of the United Kingdom." This statute also enacted regulations as to the mode of making up yarn for sale in public markets; the manner of selling flax; the various widths that linens of different denominations should be made; the sealing or stamping by the sealmaster previous to sale in a public market, &c., which are still in force with slight variation.

Just three years after its enactment, this merciless statute shared the fate of its very numerous predecessors. It was repealed, "except so far as the said Act repeals the whole or any part of any other Acts," by the 6 Geo. 4, c. 122 (passed 15th July 1828). The second section of this important statute was as follows:

"II. And be it further enacted, That from and after the commencement of this Act, all and singular the appointments of trustees for encouraging the said manufactures, whether made before or since the passing of the said recited Act, shall cease and determine, and shall be and the same are hereby declared to be null and void; and that all appointments made by the said trustees of officers and servants, or persons employed or deputed by such officers and servants to assist them in their respective duties, save as hereafter mentioned, shall also cease and determine, and shall be and the same are hereby declared to be null and

and void; and that all and singular the several powers, authorities, and duties assigned to the said officers and servants, or other persons so employed or deputed by them, under and by virtue of the said recited Act, together with all salaries, allowances, or other emoluments payable to the said officers, servants, or other persons under the authority of any appointment or appointments made by the said trustees, save as hereinafter mentioned, shall cease and determine."

The regulatory clauses of the preceding statute are then again set forth in full, and power is given to the Lord Lieutenant "or other chief governor or governors of Ireland for the time being, from time to time to nominate and appoint, in any and every county in which the linen manufacture or any branch thereof is or shall be carried on, twelve such persons residing in such county, or buying or selling linens therein, as shall appear to be fit and proper persons, to be a committee for appointing, directing, and controlling the brown linen sealmasters of such county, conformably to the regulations, provisions, and directions prescribed by this Act." The Act came into operation on the 1st September 1828, and was declared to remain and continue in force for three years, and until the end of the then next session of Parliament.

At the end of this period, and subsequently, it has been renewed, until finally succeeded by the Act now in force, of which I shall treat at length in the second section of my Report on the Linen Manufacture of Ireland.

Having, as briefly as the nature of the subject would admit, glanced at the various laws affecting the internal relations and management of the linen manufacture, while under the tutelage of the Linen Board, for upwards of a century, I proceed to the review of what may be deemed its external relations and progress.

I present, from parliamentary and official documents,

1st. An account of the number of yards of linen cloth exported annually from Ireland from the 25th March 1711, the year in which the Linen Board was appointed, to the 25th March 1800.

2d. The same, from the 25th March 1800 to the 5th January 1801.

3d. The same, from the 5th January 1801 to the 5th January 1821.

— No. 1. —

AN ACCOUNT of the Number of Yards of LINEN CLOTH, Plain, exported from Ireland between the 25th of March 1711, the Year in which the Linen Board was appointed, and the 25th of March 1781 inclusive.*

Year ending 25th March.	Number of Yards exported.	Year ending 25th March.	Number of Yards exported.	Year ending 25th March.	Number of Yards exported.
1712	1,376,122	1736	6,508,151	1759	14,093,431
1713	1,819,816	1737	6,158 785	1760	13,375,456
1714	2,188,272	1738	5,175,744	1761	12,048,381
1715	2,153,120	1739	5,962,316	1762	15,559,676
1716	2,188,105	1740	6,627,771	1763	16,013,105
1717	2,437,265	1741	7,207,741	1764	15,201,081
1718	2,247,375	1742	7,074,168	1765	14,355,205
1719	2,359,352	1743	6,058,041	1766	17,892,102
1720	2,437,984	1744	6,124,892	1767	20,148,170
1721	2,520,701	1745	7,171,963	1768	18,490,019
1722	3,419,994	1746	6,836,667	1769	17,790,705
1723	4,378,545	1747	9,633,884	1770	20,560,754
1724	3,879,170	1748	8,692,671	1771	25,376,808
1725	3,864,987	1749	9,504,339	1772	20,599,178
1726	4,368,395	1750	11,200,460	1773	18,450,700
1727	4,768,889	1751	12,891,318	1774	16,916,674
1728	4,692,764	1752	10,658,003	1775	20,205,087
1729	3,927,918	1753	10,411,787	1776	20,502,587
1730	4,136,203	1754	12,090,903	1777	19,714,638
1731	3,775,830	1755	13,379,733	1778	21,945,729
1732	3,792,551	1756	11,944,328	1779	18,863,042
1733	4,777,076	1757	15,508,709	1780	18,746,902
1734	5,451,758	1758	14,982,557	1781	14,947,265
1735	6,821,439				

* Linen Board Registers.

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— No. 2. —

An Account of the Number of Yards of Linen Cloth, Plain, exported from Ireland from the 25th March 1781 to the 25th March 1800.*

Year ending 25th March.	Number of Yards exported.	Year ending 25th March.	Number of Yards exported.	Year ending 25th March.	Number of Yards exported.
1782	24,973,303	1789	29,344,633	1795	42,780,840
1783	16,039,705	1790	37,322,125	1796	46,705,319
1784	24,961,898	1791	39,718,706	1797	36,559,746
1785	21,677,647	1792	45,581,667	1798	33,497,171
1786	28,168,666	1793	43,312,057	1799	38,466,289
1787	30,728,728	1794	43,257,764	1800	35,676,908
1788	35,481,691				

From the 25th March 1800 to the 5th January 1801,* 25,041,516 yards.

— No. 3. —

An Account of the Number of Yards of Linen Cloth, Plain, exported from Ireland from the 5th January 1801 to the 5th January 1821.*

Year ending 5th January.	Number of Yards exported.	Year ending 5th January.	Number of Yards exported.	Year ending 5th January.	Number of Yards exported.
1802	37,767,077	1809	43,904,382	1816	43,383,732
1803	35,491,151	1810	37,061,859	1817	45,617,854
1804	37,432,365	1811	36,846,971	1818	55,770,636
1805	42,988,621	1812	31,392,845	1819	50,805,586
1806	43,534,971	1813	35,787,671	1820	37,464,279
1807	39,049,727	1814	38,994,381	1821	43,507,928
1808	40,901,442	1815	42,964,064		

These returns undoubtedly show a considerable increase in the export trade within the last century; and I heard it occasionally urged, in Ireland, that the extension of the manufacture, during the period of its being under the tutelage of the Linen Board, afforded *à priori* evidence of the control and regulation having been efficiently, discreetly, and advantageously exercised. I deem it quite unnecessary to attempt to demonstrate the fallacy of such an argument, or to advance any reasoning to prove that a peculiar trade or manufacture may, from circumstances, thrive and improve, despite of unwise and impolitic statutory regulations; but admitting such improvement and extension to have occurred in the linen manufacture of Ireland, which many would be disposed to deny, it by no means follows that such result was in any degree attributable to the operations of the Linen Board.

The progress of the Scotch linen manufacture is very conclusive on this point. It was deemed expedient, in 1727, to place this manufacture also under the fostering protection of a governing body, and in that year a Board of Trustees was established by Act of Parliament for "the superintendence and improvement of the linen manufacture of Scotland." The year following their appointment the entire manufacture of Scotland was estimated at 3,000,000 yards.

In 1758 - there was stamped for sale - 10,624,435 yards.
1760 - - - - - - 11,747,728

The trade then remained almost stationary for near fifty years, and in 1813 I find it had reached but 19,799,146 yards.

In 1814 - - it amounted to - - 26,126,620
1815 - - - - - - - 32,056,015
1816 - - - - - - - 26,112,045
1817 - - - - - - - 28,784,967
1818 - - - - - - - 31,283,100
1819 - - - - - - - 29,334,428
1820 - - - - - - - 26,259,011
1821 - - - - - - - 30,473,461
1822 - - - - - - - 36,268,530

We

* Parliamentary Returns.

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We have here the same progressive increase as in the case of Ireland, and with equal propriety and justice might this extension also be placed to the credit of the Board of Trustees. The Scotch were, however, more wary, and about 1821 they made great exertions to rid themselves of the incubus which weighed down their enterprize and industry. They endeavoured first to get the office of stampmaster (analogous to that of sealmaster in Ireland) done away with. They were thus met by the Board of Trustees:—

Linen Stampmasters of Scotland.

At a Meeting of the Honourable Board of Trustees for Manufactures, &c. for Scotland, held at Edinburgh on the 21st November 1820, present the Right hon. the Lord Chief Baron, the Right hon. the Lord Chief Commissioner, the Hon. George Abercrombie, Sir John Hay, Bart., Gilbert Innes, Esq.,

A report was read from the General Surveyor of the Linen Manufacture, in which, after stating in detail the result of a survey of the stamp offices, linen warehouses, &c., made by him last harvest in the chief manufacturing counties, he adverts to a statement and a motion made in the Convention of Royal Burghs by one of its members in July last, the object of which was to show that the inspection and stamping of linen by stampmasters is useless, is a tax on the manufacture, and ought to be abolished; and the Board having taken into consideration that part of the General Surveyor's report which refers to the said motion, as well as the general policy of the system of inspecting and stamping linen, they were unanimously of opinion, and resolved,—

1st. That as this system has been acted upon in Scotland nearly for a century, and, in the judgment of all intelligent manufacturers and dealers in linen, with the greatest benefit to all concerned in the trade, nothing could be more impolitic and unwise than to attempt its overthrow.

2d. That the fee payable by law to the stampmaster, which appears the only pretext for attempting to disturb the present system, amounts upon the manufacture of Forfarshire (about three-fifths of the whole manufacture of Scotland) to not more than one penny in the pound sterling, and upon a considerable proportion of that manufacture to not more than a penny in 30 shillings.

3d. That for this fee the stampmaster is bound to examine every web of linen from end to end; to ascertain that it is fairly and equally woven throughout, and in that case to measure it, and to stamp upon it the precise length and breadth; for the correctness of all which he is responsible to the buyers, under a heavy penalty.

4th. That dealers in linen are thus enabled, by a glance at the outer fold of every web, to make their purchases with a certainty that the web is good as the sample exhibited by its outer fold, and that it is of the precise measure stamped on it; and if they find it otherwise, they have only to look at the stamp, in order to obtain indemnification from the stampmaster.

5th. That the facility and security thus afforded to the purchasers of linen, appear to the Board of incalculably greater value to those purchasers than if they were to save the fee of a penny in the pound payable to the stampmaster, since, for this trifling saving, they themselves would be obliged to become examiners, stampers, and guarantees of the linen.

6th. That a guarantee or certificate from a dealer, as to an article of his own, must obviously be less satisfactory to the buyer than that of a public officer, a neutral person, having no motive whatever to be partial in the discharge of his duty, nor any interest in the sale.

7th. That the Board make it a rule not to appoint any person to the office of stampmaster unless he produce evidence, both of his good character and of his having been regularly bred a linen-weaver, and that he is in all respects master of his business; thus providing for the skill necessary to check the faults in the webs submitted to his inspection, and to point out to the weaver the means of avoiding a repetition of them; while, at the same time, the Board require a bond of cautionary from them, to make good any damage occasioned through his default, and have the power of dismissing him in case of misconduct.

8th. That under the present system the linen manufacture of Scotland has gradually increased from 2,000,000 to 30,000,000 of yards since the year 1728, and has attained also a very high character.

9th. That the experiment made some years ago by a number of the weavers

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in Dundee, to carry on the manufacture of the fabric called Bagging, without submitting it to public inspection and stamping, and the notorious debasement and depreciation in the same increases.

10th. That all these circumstances appear to the Board to form an irresistible argument against any innovation in the laws regulating the inspection and stamping of linen, for which not the slightest reason has been brought forward; it being impossible to view without the utmost surprise, a complaint at this period respecting a fee so very moderate, and which has been paid ever since the year 1728.

And the Board ordered that a copy of the above resolutions be sent to the Convention of Royal Burghs, along with a copy of the general surveyor's report upon the subject, for their consideration; and that the agent to the convention shall be requested to transmit a copy thereof to the chief magistrate of each Royal Burgh; and that the resolutions shall be published in the Glasgow, Perth, Dundee, Montrose, and Aberdeen newspapers.

W. Arbuthnot, Sec.

All the self-satisfaction and fearful forebodings contained in these resolutions were, however, unavailing. The following year, not only the stampmasters, but the Board of Trustees were abolished, and the entire linen manufacture of Scotland left perfectly untrammelled. I proceed to show with what result.

In 1745 only 74 tons of flax were imported into Dundee, and her shipments of linen cloth were estimated at 1,000,000 yards. In 1791, Dundee imported 2,444 tons of flax and 299 tons of hemp,—her exports that year being 7,842,000 yards of linen, 280,000 yards of sail-cloth, and 65,000 of bagging. In the year ending 31st May 1832, ten years after the abolition of the protective and encouraging care of the trustees, her imports were 15,010 tons of flax, and 3082 tons of hemp; and her shipments 356,817 pieces of linen, or about 50,000,000 yards; 85,522 pieces, or about 3,500,000 yards of sail-cloth, and about 4,000,000 yards of bagging; giving a total of 57,500,000 yards*.

It is important here to observe, that with only ten years' freedom from legislative thraldom, the one port of Dundee had attained a larger extent of export than either the entire of Ireland or Scotland ever possessed while under the tutelage of their respective Boards; and were I to stop here, I consider I should have clearly established the advantage of leaving trade unfettered, by having shown that no nursing, however tender, calls forth its energies or its powers as effectually, or as efficiently, as exposing it to its own resources.

Through the polite attention and industry of the collector of the customs at Dundee, Mr. Symn, I am however enabled to trace the progress of the Dundee linen trade almost to the hour in which I write. The subjoined tables show that vast as was its increase in its earliest years of liberty, it still continues steadily on the advance.

A Statement of the Number of Pieces of Linen and of Sail Cloth Exported and Shipped Coastwise from the Port of Dundee in the undermentioned Years, ending 31st May, from documents furnished by Shore Dues Office.

	1831.	1832.	1833.	1834.	1835.	1836.	1837.	1838.	From 31st May to 30th Nov. 1838, Half year.
Osnaburgs -	96,957	87,570	100,713	122,191	139,450	106,227	66,724	72,952	40,600
Sheetings - -	131,660	143,250	148,377	164,730	165,957	184,327	188,386	195,375	100,700
Cotton bagging	65,592	49,036	27,179	30,521	80,158	159,494	79,649	23,216	19,413
Sundry ditto -	7,395	13,163	16,793	13,357	12,511	21,841	20,193	14,576	12,528
Sail-cloth - -	74,268	85,522	81,754	106,677	103,010	99,805	125,496	121,004	73,593
Sacking - -	45,893	47,948	57,242	67,749	57,177	60,369	72,126	90,903	56,479
Dowlas - -	40,915	68,448	69,774	52,644	46,733	63,262	72,615	79,511	38,537
Sundries - -	11,550	9,601	13,374	13,048	13,709	15,619	16,749	16,171	10,160
	274,230	504,538	515,206	570,917	618,705	710,944	641,938	613,708	352,010

Custom House, Dundee, 22d December 1838. (Signed) *Colin Symn*, Collector.

* M'Culloch's Commercial Dictionary, Art. Linen.

STATEMENT showing the Quantities of Hemp and Flax, including Tow and Codilla of Hemp and Flax, imported from Foreign Parts into the Port of Dundee, in each of the Years, 1831, 1832, 1833, 1834, 1835, 1836, 1837, and to 5th December, 1838; also of the Value of Linens exported direct to Foreign Parts in same periods, according to the returns made up at the Custom House.

YEARS.	IMPORTED.		Value of Linens and Sail Cloth exported to Foreign Parts.
	Hemp.	Flax, including Tow, or Codilla of Flax or Hemp.	
	Tons.	*Tons.*	£. s. d.
1831 - - -	1,747	16,431	611,564 – 7
1832 - - -	2,041	19,926	176,975 19 11
1833 - - -	1,765	20,664	243,526 18 10
1834 - - -	3,053	16,234	163,707 10 4
1835 - - -	6,458	16,927	332,105 5 8
1836 - - -	1,824	38,341	317,593 – 6
1837 - - -	849	13,596	119,513 – 1
1838 to 5th Dec.	1,066	26,926	199,235 5 5

STATEMENT, as made up at Shore Dues Office, of the Quantities of Flax, Flax Codilla, Hemp, and Hemp Codilla, imported at Dundee in each of the Years ending 31st May, 1831, 1832, 1833, 1834, 1835, 1836, 1837, 1838, and for the half Year from 31st May to 30th November 1838.

YEARS.	Flax.	Flax Codilla.	Hemp.	Hemp Codilla.
	Tons.	*Tons.*	*Tons.*	*Tons.*
1831 - - -	14,607	3,907	2,179	1,566
1832 - - -	10,907	4,103	1,607	1,475
1833 - - -	16,040	2,737	2,875	505
1834 - - -	18,096	4,868	2,453	748
1835 - - -	12,141	6,497	5,397	1,124
1836 - - -	16,629	5,393	6,213	1,330
1837 - - -	22,461	8,279	1,768	1,641
1838 - - -	13,624	3,784	1,490	811
1st June to 30th Nov. 1838 - - -	16,445	5,657	1,079	661

The earlier progress of the manufacture having been computed, and shown in yards, I communicated with the Collector upon the average number of yards I might fairly assume to be comprised in each piece. His return is as follows:—

Osnaburghs - - - - - -	155 yards per piece.
Sheetings - - - - - -	130 —
Cotton bagging - - - - -	70 —
Sundry ditto - - - - -	80 —
Sail cloth - - - - - -	40 —
Sacking - - - - - - -	75 —
Dowlas - - - - - - -	120 —
Sundries - - - - - -	100 —

Multiplying therefore the several denominations of linen exported, by the above scale of the average number of yards contained in each piece, it gives the total exports of the trade from Dundee for the six months ending 30th November, 1838, 34,567,235 yards.

For the year ending 31st May 1831, 38,504,670 yards.
For the year ending 31st May 1837, 62,741,260 yards.
For the year ending 31st May 1838, 62,313,815 yards.

It is as much to be regretted as reprehended, that with great apparent facilities for collecting and preserving correc treturns of the linen manufacture of Ireland, whereby its extension or decline might be, at all times, easily known, and the causes of either investigated and considered, there exists a total absence of anything approaching to accurate commercial, or manufacturing statistics. I rarely found that a sealmaster, though deriving his income mainly from the number of pieces of linen he sealed, kept any account of the quantity. The

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custom-houses lump butter, bacon, linen, and almost all other articles of Irish produce (corn excepted), under the comprehensive head of "British goods," and preserve no record of the quantity or value of either, shipped to England. In common, therefore, with all who have attempted the investigation before me, I can offer but secondary evidence, indeed but mere opinions, of the comparative increase or decrease of the linen manufacture, since the abolition of the Linen Board; the latter only, be it remembered, recording the export trade. Mr. M'Culloch, in his Commercial Dictionary,* says, "There are no means by which to form an accurate estimate of the entire value of the linen manufacture."

Mr. Stanley, the assistant secretary to the Poor Law Commission in Dublin, in an essay on Ireland, which obtained the Cloncurry prize in 1831, states, "There is no way of ascertaining the present extent of linen manufacturing in Ireland. The trade is carried on largely in several counties, but no accurate accounts of the home trade have ever been kept, and exports have not been registered since 1825."

The Irish Railroad Commissioners, one of whom was Mr. Drummond, the under secretary for Ireland, and therefore, I may assume, commanding the Government influence, observe in their second Report, recently published, "We regret that no authentic information, showing the state of the linen trade, can be obtained subsequent to the year 1824, when the Linen Board was discontinued.

I have quoted these respectable and intelligent authorities in corroboration of the difficulties I found in endeavouring to obtain authentic information on this important subject, and in extenuation of my being able only to lay before you the opinions of a few of the most experienced members of the linen trade, where you may naturally have looked forward to receiving conclusive evidence.

Mr. William Kirk, of Annevale, a member of the linen committee of the county Armagh, says, "I think the linen trade in Ireland is increasing, and will greatly increase, if, by prudent commercial treaties, our present opening to the continent of Europe is extended."

Mr. William Miller, of Ross Lodge, Antrim, a member of the linen committee of the county Antrim, states, "There has been an increase in the linen trade of Ballymena within the last seven years; but nevertheless there has been, generally speaking, a decrease in the linen trade of Ireland in the same period," &c.

Mr. Thomas Eyre, of Blackwatertown, a member of the counties Tyrone and Armagh committees, writes: "I should say there is no great change in the quantity of linens manufactured; but taking the province of Ulster altogether, it is increasing."

Mr. Alexander Hunter, an extensive manufacturer at Dunmurry, near Coleraine, says, "I think it much increasing, and caused by mill spun yarn."

Mr. Joseph M'Kee, a large manufacturer at Keady, county Armagh, and member of the linen committee for that county, says, "I am of opinion that the linen trade is much on the increase."

Mr. James Murland, a very extensive manufacturer, and member of the county Down committee, says, "There is not a doubt that the linen trade is increasing."

Thomas M. Birnie, Esq., a magistrate, and member of the county Antrim committee, says—"Increasing."

Mr. Edward Sproule, of Castlederg, a member of the county Tyrone committee, states: "The linen trade of Ulster is not so extensive as it was 20 years ago, at least not so in country districts; but how far the apparent diminution may be compensated for in the increased quantities produced at the large manufactories of Armagh, Down, and Antrim, I have no means of discovering."

Mr. John Walker, of Magherafelt, writes: "I am of opinion the linen trade of Ireland is increasing in quantity, though the last two years is an exception," &c.

Mr. Carey M'Clellan, of Larchmount, a member of the county Derry committee, states: "I consider the trade increasing at present, owing, I think, to low prices as much as any thing else."

Messrs. William Orr and Sons, linen manufacturers at Loughgall, county Armagh,

* Art. Linen.

Armagh, write: "We consider it decreasing in many particulars, and that the Scotch are taking a great deal of it from us." Linen Manufacture of Ireland.

I might multiply opinions of this sort almost to an indefinite extent; but these will, I consider, be enough to show the variety of views formed among persons all of extensive experience; and the total absence of any thing like correct data by which they can judge accurately. Report of R. M. Muggeridge, Esq.

LINEN MANUFACTURE, IRELAND.

Part II.—Statutory Regulations.

The present statutory regulation of the linen manufacture is under the Act 5 & 6 Will. 4. cap. 27, commonly called the Linen Act, which was, during the last session of Parliament, continued in force for five years longer, by the 1 & 2 Victoria, cap. 52.

The powers and authorities existing under the statute are,

1st. A committee of 12 persons in each county in which the linen manufacture is carried on, to be nominated and appointed by the Lord Lieutenant, and to be selected from "persons residing in such county, or buying or selling linens therein, as shall appear to be fit and proper persons, (such persons) to be a committee for appointing, directing and controlling the inspectors and brown linen sealmasters of such county;" * and,

2d. The inspectors and sealmasters, whom the committee so chosen appoint.

Under the 16th section of the Act it is declared, "That every such committee, having formed a list of all persons acting as sealmasters in the county for which such committee shall be appointed, shall then proceed to revise the said list; and it shall and may be lawful for every such committee, or any five or more of them, upon such revision, to dismiss any person from the situation of sealmaster whom they shall consider to be unfit for such situation, and to appoint another in place of the person so dismissed, and so from time to time to dismiss and appoint every such person as such committee, or any five or more of them, shall deem it right to dismiss from or appoint to the office and situation of a sealmaster of brown linen, limiting or extending the number of such sealmasters according as it shall seem to such Committee to be expedient and necessary; and it shall and may be lawful for every such committee, or any five or more of them, to confine the duties and authorities of every sealmaster to such particular linen market or markets in their respective counties as they shall think proper, and to dismiss any sealmaster who shall refuse or neglect to obey any such rules, regulations and directions as such committee shall lay down for the government of such sealmaster; provided that nothing contained in the said rules, regulations, and directions shall be contrary to any of the provisions of this Act." Committee may remove sealmasters, and appoint others.

The 17th section gives power to the Lord Lieutenant to confirm or revoke the dismissal of a sealmaster.

The 18th section provides that sealmasters shall give security.

The 21st section prescribes their duties, as follows:—"And be it further enacted, that every sealmaster of brown or unbleached linen, appointed as aforesaid, shall carefully view, examine and measure every piece of such linen which shall be produced and offered to him to be sealed; and if the same shall appear to him to be merchantable, and to be conformable to the directions in this Act contained, then, and not otherwise, such sealmaster shall affix or cause to be affixed a fair impression of such seal as shall be appointed for him by the said committee, with lamp-black, or vermilion, or stone-blue, and size or common oil, on the middle of such fold, at no more than 13 inches from the end of such piece, and shall likewise mark or cause to be marked with such ingredients as aforesaid, on the back or outside of every such piece, the length of such piece, and the number of inches it contains in breadth, and also the half inch, if the same shall be in breadth half an inch more than any number of inches (without regard to any lesser fractions of an inch), together with the name of such sealmaster, and the parish and county where he Duties of sealmasters.

* Originally established under the 6 Geo. 4, c. 122.

Linen Manufacture of Ireland.

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he resides, or the name of the market town for which he may be appointed to act; and if any parts of such piece shall be damaged or faulty, but not so damaged or faulty as to render the same unmerchantable, every such damaged or faulty part shall be fairly exposed in the lap or bosom of such piece, so as that the same may be easily seen; and opposite to such damaged or faulty part, upon the bosom of every such piece, such sealmaster shall affix or cause to be affixed an impression of his seal, with such ingredients as aforesaid, to denote such damaged or faulty part; and such sealmaster shall and may demand and take the sum of

Their fees.

1 *d.*, and no more, for every piece of brown or unbleached linen containing 25 yards or under which shall be by him sealed as aforesaid, and so in proportion for a greater quantity; and if any such sealmaster shall offend by neglecting or

Penalty for neglect.

transgressing any one of the regulations aforesaid, every such sealmaster shall forfeit a sum not less than 5 *s.* nor exceeding 20 *s.* for every such offence."

No person to sell or buy any unbleached linen not sealed.

The 22d section enacts, "That no person shall in open fair or market in Ireland, sell or expose to sale, buy or agree to buy, any pieces of brown or unbleached linen which shall not, at the time of selling or exposing the same to sale, be sealed and marked as required by this Act, upon pain of forfeiting the sum of 5 *s.* for every piece of linen so sold or exposed to sale."

Sealmasters to measure between buyer and seller.

The 23d section declares, "That all brown linen shall be measured between seal and seal, and bad and insufficient ends shall not be taken into the length thereof; and such linen shall be bought and sold by no other measure than the statute yard containing 36 inches; and no extraordinary measure or allowance, except the breadth of a thumb, as is now generally practised, to every yard in the measuring thereof, shall be made therein by the seller to the buyer, or required, or accepted of, or taken by the buyer from the seller upon pain that every person buying or selling any such linen contrary to the true intent and meaning of this Act, shall forfeit not less than 2 *s.* 6 *d.* nor more than 5 *s.* for every such offence."

Buyers may recover from sealmasters for damage or deficiency in linen.

The 24th section is as follows: "And be it further enacted, that if any person shall sustain any loss or damage in the buying any piece of brown or unbleached linen, by any damaged part being concealed in the folds thereof, or by its not answering the measure as to the length or breadth marked thereon by any sealmaster, it shall and may be lawful to and for such person to sue for and recover from the sealmaster of such piece, or the persons who shall at the time of such sealing be bound as security for his faithful discharge of the office of sealmaster, the full value of the loss or damage so sustained."

It is obvious from a perusal of these sections of the statute, and from the multifarious proceedings on this subject before the Linen Board, to which I have previously adverted, that the intention of the Legislature in creating the office of sealmaster, was to establish between the buyer and seller, a perfectly independent public officer, bound in the strongest manner to do justice to both, and prevent either taking advantage of the other.

The alleged grounds of the necessity and policy of such an appointment was, that linens, as an article of mercantile speculation, were purchased in large quantities, at public markets, by "persons whose time was limited, and extremely valuable to them;" and that they had "not leisure" to unfold, examine and measure each web; and therefore, that without the appointment of such public officer, they would be obliged to take the weaver's word, both for the equal quality throughout, and the measure; and that if their English or foreign correspondents should afterwards discover a mistake, or an imposition, either in the quality or quantity, it would often be found impossible to trace the web to the individual weaver who had sold it; or, if traced, to obtain redress from him, by reason of his poverty.

It was also strongly urged, that the frauds practised by the weavers, in making the webs of different thickness in different parts, and of making the outside folds of superior quality to others, had brought the manufacture into great disrepute, both at home and abroad; which, unless checked, would be likely, ultimately, to destroy the trade.

The mere demand of such an appointment augurs anything but a wholesome state of commercial relations; and, apart from the abuses which have crept into the mode of making such appointments, their prolonged tenability, upon public grounds only, might now be justly questioned; the latter, however, are quite of a character to show that the intentions of the Legislature have been entirely frustrated. In several instances the committee have appointed members of their own

body

body to be seal-masters. In the county of Antrim some markets, such as Dervock and Ballymoney, are confined entirely to one sealmaster, who is unconnected with the manufacture. Many large manufacturers are allowed to seal for Portglenone, and "all of good character, who employ more than 20 looms, are allowed seals on application to the committee."* Mr. William Kirk, an extensive bleacher at Annevale, near Keady, in the county Armagh, a member of the linen committee for that county, says, "I do not exactly know how many sealmasters are in this county; perhaps 40 or 50, who were appointed generally." Mr. Joseph M'Kee, another member of the same committee, says, "We have appointed about 65 sealmasters." There are but four markets in this county, Armagh, Lurgan, Tanderagee, and Portadown; and many seals are held by manufacturers, who certify to the qualities of their own manufacture.

Mr. Thomas Ayre, of Benbuel Castle, near Blackwatertown, a member of the Tyrone and Armagh county committees, writes, "In the county Armagh there are from 50 to 60 sealmasters, who attend the different markets, besides many manufacturers who have taken out seals solely for sealing their own linen. In fact, any person, making proper application, could get a seal in that county. In Tyrone there is only one sealmaster for each market, and a manufacturer must employ a certain number of looms to entitle him to a seal, and give security not to put it on any linens excepting his own manufacture. The Tyrone system I consider far preferable. I do not think one-fourth of the linens that go to the Armagh markets are measured or examined by the sealmasters: they put on (stamp) whatever the weavers tell them. I think the present system of sealmasters injurious to the trade. In my opinion, each buyer should be his own sealmaster and inspector, and see before he pays for the linen that there are no frauds. With the exception of that part of the Linen Act relating to the weavers and their employers,† I think the trade generally would be better without it."

Mr. Edward Sproul, of Spamount, near Castlederg, also a member of the county Tyrone committee, says, "As to sealmasters, we have, upon principle, only appointed one or two to each market. The linen seals, being held by responsible persons, who have a profitable interest in the office, are discharged in a very efficient manner," &c. He subsequently adds, in enumerating the sealmasters, "Mrs. Boyce, of Newtownstewart, has been continued in the office held by her late husband, Samuel Boyce, for Newtownstewart."

Neither is it found, in practice, that the ostensible duties of the sealmasters are adequately, or even legally, performed. The 22d section of the Act before quoted, provides that no linen shall be offered for sale in public market, unless it has the sealmaster's stamp upon it. The preceding section (the 21st) says, every sealmaster shall "carefully view, examine, and measure" every piece before he stamps it; and shall likewise mark, or cause to be marked, on the outside of every such piece, "the length of such piece, and the number of inches it contains in breadth," &c. Now the uniform and invariable practice in Ireland, in all the markets I attended, is not to measure the length of a piece before it is offered in the market, but to affix the seal to it previously; and when it is sold, then, and not before, it is measured, and the length marked on it in figures, and paid for accordingly. It should be stated, that this deviation from the letter and spirit of the Act is said to be made solely in reference to the feelings and interests of the weaver, whose cloth, if subjected to the rumpling and tumbling consequent on its being measured, would present a less attractive shape or appearance in the eyes of the buyer. Dr. Boyd, the sealmaster of Coleraine, told me that any attempt to measure the webs before their sale "would produce a revolution among the weavers."

The result of all this parade of official measurement is precisely this:—The bleacher, or merchant, having bought a piece of linen in a public market, pays for it, at a place appointed by him for the purpose, in the afternoon of the market day, according to the number of yards it contains, as attested by the sealmaster's stamp, the actual measurement being very frequently dispensed with. When he gets it home, he almost invariably measures it on his own premises. He finds, perhaps, it is a quarter of a yard less than stamped, and, according to the Act of Parliament,

* Letter from Thos. M. Birnie, Esq. of Dunminning, near Ballymena, a magistrate, and member of the linen committee of the county Antrim.

† The embezzlement, &c. clauses.

ment, he comes on the sealmaster for the full value of the loss sustained, which, however, is never estimated at less than the price of a yard. This he receives. The sealmaster then calls on his deputy, or measurer, to reimburse him the amount he has been called on to pay; the sealmasters generally hiring men to measure for them at so much per day, and making it a condition that they shall pay any claims made upon their employer for over measurement. The measurer, in his turn, falls upon the weaver who made the web, and makes him refund the deficiency; a refusal of which would, it was stated, invariably lead to future close measurement of the webs subsequently presented for sealing.

Thus it frequently happens, that the poor weaver who has actually paid a public officer for measuring his web, finds that, three weeks or a month after he has sold it,—parted with it, and received payment for it,—he is compelled to refund a certain sum, on the plea that it is not the length which the public officer has duly certified it to be, and for which certificate or seal he had previously paid a fee. These are cases, it was alleged, of almost constant occurrence, and always regarded as of hardship or oppression. It was also urged, that if at the bleach-green the deficiency in the stated length turned out to be but one inch, which a web might "creep in," either from the heat of the atmosphere, or from being placed in a peculiarly dry room or warehouse, the general practice was to deduct the price of a yard; but extend what it would over the measurement, no extra payment was ever made.

The surveillance of the sealmaster, incomplete and inefficient as I have shown it to be, extends only, it must be remembered, over such pieces of linen "as are exposed for sale in open fair or market," the 12th section declaring, "That nothing in this Act contained shall extend, or be construed to extend to, nor shall affect any flax, yarn, or linens not sold nor exposed for sale in open fair or market, it being the true intent and meaning of this Act that all persons may manufacture and make up flax, yarn, or linens in any manner they may think proper, and sell the same, without being subject to any regulations, penalties, or provisions in this Act contained, unless they sell or expose for sale the same in open fair or market." The proportion of the linen manufactured in Ireland so "exposed for sale in open fair or market" is every day decreasing, from causes to which I shall have occasion to advert at some length, and at present is probably far short of one-fourth part of the entire manufacture of the country. The bulk of the trade has fallen into the hands of manufacturers employing weavers, and their transactions being conducted mostly through private sale, do not come within the jurisdiction of the sealmaster; and if they did, it would probably be found that the manufacturer was his own sealmaster, and combined both characters in his own person.

Many of the trade, apart from the merely operative weaver, who is the seller, urge that the office of sealmaster is one of great protection to buyers; and unquestionably, to those who are too indolent, or, as was formerly alleged, "whose time is too valuable" to be taken up with ascertaining the quality of the material they are purchasing,—to such persons the office may be of advantage; and no doubt if every man, be his calling what it may, who went to make a purchase of any article, could have its exact quality and quantity previously tested by an experienced public officer, without any cost to him, many dear or bad bargains might be avoided. But inasmuch as this is not the case, and in all other commercial or trading transactions, men are left to the exercise of their own skill and discernment,—or, if they seek other opinions, as a man buying a horse frequently employs a veterinary surgeon, they are called on to pay for them,—I cannot discern either reason or justice for compelling the poor hand-loom linen-weaver to pay, by statute, the salary of an officer whose advantage, if any, must be to the buyer, and to his detriment as the seller.

REGARDING THEREFORE THE NATURE OF THE OFFICE OF SEALMASTER, THE MODE IN WHICH ITS DUTIES ARE ORDINARILY PERFORMED, THE WANT OF UNIFORMITY OF SYSTEM IN THE NUMBER, RESPONSIBILITY, AND CHARACTER OF THE APPOINTMENTS, AND THE ALTERED POSITION OF, AND MANNER OF CARRYING ON THE LINEN MANUFACTURE, SINCE THE PERIOD OF THE CREATION OF THESE OFFICERS, I AM INDUCED, FROM THESE AND OTHER CAUSES, TO RECOMMEND THAT THE OFFICE OF SEALMASTER BE ABOLISHED.

The next class of officers under the Linen Act, of whose position and duties it is desirable to take a brief survey, are the "inspectors of brown linen, and linen yarn and flax markets."

Their

Their mode of appointment and duties are thus defined under the 25th and 26th sections.

25. And be it further enacted, that it shall and may be lawful for the committees aforesaid, or any five of their body, to appoint inspectors for such brown linen and linen yarn and flax markets, within each of their said counties, as may appear to such committees necessary for the better regulation of such brown linen, linen yarn, and flax markets within such counties; and that it shall and may be lawful for such committees at any time to dismiss or discontinue such inspectors, and to appoint others in their places; provided that it shall not be lawful for such committees to impose any fine, charge, or impost whatsoever for the remuneration or emolument of such inspectors.

Committee shall appoint inspectors.

26. And be it further enacted, that every such inspector so appointed shall have full power and authority to inspect and examine all brown linen, linen yarn, or flax exposed for sale in any public market or fair to which he shall have been appointed as aforesaid; and he is hereby authorized and required to seize any linen yarn or flax so sold or exposed for sale in public fair or market not conformable to the regulations prescribed in this Act; and such inspector shall forthwith carry such linen, yarn, or flax before the next justice of the peace or other chief magistrate within their respective jurisdictions, to be dealt with according to law; and in case a justice of the peace or other magistrate cannot be forthwith found, then such inspector may detain such linen, yarn, or flax so seized, if necessary, for 48 hours, but no longer, to be dealt with as aforesaid; and such inspector shall, as often as he may be called on by the committee of the county for which he shall act, return a diary or journal of his proceedings, and a true account of all linens, yarns, and flax by him seized or informed against, and also a true account of the fines imposed and levied or paid on such linens, yarns, or flax, and also pay the amount of the said fines received by him to such committee when required so to do.

Duty of inspectors.

The office of inspector was always viewed with favour by all, save the dishonest portion of the trade, but by singular infelicity the statute appointing them also provided, that "it shall not be lawful to impose any fine, charge, or impost whatsoever for the remuneration or emolument of such inspector."

The linen committees attempted to get over this obstacle in the Act, by appointing inspectors, with a private understanding, that they should not be called upon to pay over any fines they might succeed in levying, but retain them as remuneration for their services and trouble. On these conditions many respectable persons undertook the office, and, in almost every instance, the most advantageous results are stated to have followed. Great numbers of frauds were detected and punished, and many markets, previously in so impure a state as to keep respectable purchasers away from them, attained a good character, and greatly increased their amount of sales effected, and business transacted. By the efficient exercise of the inspector's authority, he protected the honest weaver from the competition of the fraudulent "glazed, pasted or spouted web;" he guarded him against the dishonesty of the false and cheating spinner or reeler, who would otherwise, as he was wont to do, make up the hanks of yarn deficient in count and length*, and sell the weaver less in quantity than he supposed he was buying; and he assisted the buyer by preventing fraudulently made webs from being imposed upon him. His general authority to seize any linen, yarn or flax, "not conformable to the regulations prescribed by the Act," gave ample scope for the detection of the almost innumerable deceptions to which such a trade is exposed.

It will be obvious to the Board, that just in the degree, however, in which the efficiency of the inspector raised the character of a market, and rendered less frequent the attempts at fraud, did he lessen his own income, by the comparative decrease of the number of fines he was enabled to levy. Whenever a market became perfectly honest, he was deprived of all remuneration, because there was nothing for him to seize or fine. This result was actually produced in almost every

* Yarn in the country markets is usually sold by the spangle, or the hank. Four hanks make a spangle. Every hank should be 1 ¼ yard in length, and 2 ½ in circumference, and should comprise 12 cuts, of 120 threads to the cut. "Deficiency in count" is when, instead of 120 threads to the cut, there may be perhaps but 110 or 100. "Deficiency in length" is when the hank is not as long as it should be, perhaps a yard and a few inches, instead of a yard and a quarter.

every instance in which the inspector was really a zealous and active officer; and in consequence the office of inspector has, in such places, fallen into desuetude.

I remember either reading or hearing it related, that in one of the unions formed under the Poor Law Amendment Act, in a pauperised district, the guardians appointed four relieving officers. By dint of great personal exertion and investigation, these officers soon detected so many cases of fraud among the applicants for relief, that they reduced the number of paupers nearly one-third. The guardians thought that, under these circumstances, they could do with three relieving officers instead of four, and one was discharged. Soon after, the vigilance of the officers decreased the number of paupers still more, and the services of another relieving officer were dispensed with. The remaining two then met together, and agreed, that if they went on reducing the number of paupers as they had been doing, the guardians would soon find out that one relieving officer was sufficient; and they mutually determined thenceforward to be a little less zealous in the discharge of their duty. The guardians, in their overstrained anxiety to save the funds of the rate-payers, had actually made it seem the interest of their officers to perpetuate a certain amount of pauperism to protect themselves.

In precisely a similar way has the system of remunerating the linen inspectors in Ireland been for some time working. The best and most efficient officers have exerted themselves out of occupation. The less zealous have retained still just enough of reward to render them indifferent to the proper discharge of their duties. Most of the intelligent witnesses I examined attested these facts, and urgently demanded a remedy.

Mr. Edward Sproul, a member of the Tyrone county committee, states:—"There is one inspector for the linen markets within our bounds; he is also yarn inspector, and has a deputy. This office is not discharged in an efficient manner. Having no salary, the office of inspector is not sought for by the same respectable and influential persons that offered under the late Linen Board. In this department, I think very important benefits would have been conferred upon the trade, had the salaries to county inspectors been continued, as under the Linen Board."

Mr. Wm. Kirk, of the county Armagh committee, recommends that "an efficient system of inspection be adopted by the payment of a small salary to each inspector, and granting them the power of retaining the cloth, yarn, &c. found fraudulent and seized, until the next market day, instead of 48 hours, as sec. 26, Linen Act." He afterwards states, that the trade would, in his judgment, be benefited "by rendering the office of inspector more respectable and more efficient."

Mr. Alexander Hunter, an extensive manufacturer near Coleraine, says, "I think it would be beneficial if the inspector was appointed by the assistant barrister, to whom complaint could be made at quarter sessions, when necessary."

Mr. Carey M'Clelland, a member of the county Derry committee, states, "The inspectors appointed under the Linen Act have no salaries. The committees usually give them whatever sums they inflict as fines; but if they are active in the discharge of their duty, they, of course, lessen the amount of their remuneration just in the proportion in which they succeed in diminishing offences. This I think defective, and would strongly recommend their being remunerated by small fixed salaries."

John Adair, an operative at Dundrain, near Londonderry, says, "We (the weavers) are all wanting an inspector, or yarn gauger, to be appointed, but at present the Derry market does not support one. They have no remuneration under the Act."

John Duff, a weaver at Aughanleague, near Armagh, says, "It would be a great relief, if there was a yarn gauger, or some such officer, to see that the weavers have proper count in their yarn. The weavers lose heavy through this."

Mr. William Orr, a manufacturer at Loughgall, county Armagh, says, "A better regulation and inspection of the hand-spun yarn market is very much wanted, and would be as great a benefit to the weaver as to the manufacturer. Nothing is more generally complained of."

Henry Adams, a weaver at Coleraine, says, "Much of the hand-spun yarn that comes to market is short of length and count. It is often deficient one cut

ot

to the hank. We want a Government gauger to measure it fairly, as the weaver is always the loser. The mill-spun linen yarn is never short, but rather more."

Many other witnesses testified the same facts and strongly urged that the office of inspector should be put upon a more efficient and respectable footing.

I am perfectly satisfied of the inefficiency of the present arrangements on this subject, and of the great distinction existing in the degree of surveillance exercised over the manufacture in the various linen markets throughout the country. In some few, there is yet, perhaps, adequate inspection. In others, it is less perfect; and in many more, there is none at all. It is unquestionably desirable that an uniform system should be adopted; and this, I think, could in no way be so effectually secured as by taking away the appointments from the county committees, many of which are acting at variance with each other, and placing them in the hands of an officer, to whom, when appointed, they should be responsible, and who should himself be made responsible to higher authority.

In the consideration of this subject, it should, however, be borne in mind, that every year renders the necessity of any such appointments less and less imperative. As regards the yarn markets, where the services of an efficient inspector would be the most beneficially exercised, the quantities of hand-spun yarn offered for sale are rapidly diminishing, and giving place fast to the mill-spun yarn, against which there are no complaints of deficiency in count or length, and consequently no call for, or need of inspection.

Again, the quantity of cloth "exposed for sale in public market," and which alone comes under the cognizance of an inspector, is as rapidly decreasing, generally speaking, as the hand-spun yarn, under the widely extending system, now so prevalent, of manufacturers giving out materials to be woven for them, which they dispose of, when finished, in their own lapping-rooms or counting-houses, and which very rarely finds its way into the public market.

This system, and the use of mill-spun yarn, are both so obviously politic and desirable, that I have little doubt that, at no distant day, we shall find the linen manufacture conducted in no other manner, and no necessity existing for any inspectors. At the same time, as many prejudices, and many erroneous views of self-interest, may retard some few years longer this impending result, and as the present plan of inspection is not only inefficacious, but absolutely partial and pernicious, I feel its abolition to be so desirable, that, if it could not be procured on easier terms, I WOULD RECOMMEND THAT HER MAJESTY, UNDER THE ROYAL SIGN MANUAL, BE EMPOWERED TO APPOINT A PROPER PERSON TO BE INSPECTOR-GENERAL OF YARN AND LINEN MARKETS IN IRELAND, AND THAT SUCH PERSON BE AUTHORIZED TO APPOINT INSPECTORS FOR COUNTIES OR DISTRICTS, OR PLACES; THE WHOLE TO HOLD OFFICE DURING PLEASURE, AND TO BE REMUNERATED BY FIXED SALARIES.

There are 49 markets in the province of Ulster, and not as many more in the remaining provinces. If the average cost of inspection of each market was 40*l.*, which would, I should suppose, be ample, the total annual charge of such an arrangement throughout Ireland, including the salary of the inspector-general, would not exceed 5,000*l.*

It would be for consideration whether the inspectors should, as is the present custom, retain the amount of fines they levy, or any and what proportion of them. These would necessarily vary very much in amount. The fines levied by the linen inspectors of the county of Derry I found to be, from 1829 to 1838, 592*l.* 19*s.* 2*d.*, giving an annual average of about 65*l.* Those levied in the markets of Moneymore and Magherafelt, for three years, amounted to 90*l.* 14*s.* 6*d.*; the Kilrea market, for the same time, 73*l.* 10*s.* 6*d.*; but these afford no criterion whatever of what would be the sum levied under more efficient control and inspection.

There are other duties, apart from mere inspection, which might, with great advantage to the trade, be required of the inspectors, if persons of character and responsibility.

I proceed to the consideration of another portion of the subject, of equal importance with a more efficient regulation of the public markets of Ireland, namely, the law which regulates the private trade, or manufacture. Forty years ago, almost the entire weaving of the country was done by, or on account of weavers. Each man bought, or raised and prepared his own materials, from which he made his linen web, and sold it in the public market, or by private contract, to agents or travellers who went round the country to make purchases. Those weavers who had more than one loom, entrusted them either to other members

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of their families, or to apprentices or journeymen, under their own personal inspection. The latter were frequently remunerated by a scale now almost exploded, which was termed "the fourth penny;" that is, each journeyman received, as his wages for weaving a piece of cloth, one-fourth part of the gross sum such cloth sold for. The difference between the remaining three-fourths of the value of the web, and the cost of the materials, with wear and tear of the loom &c., formed the profit of its owner.

At this period, many weavers, who were small farmers also, had from three to six or eight looms in their houses. The spinning and various preparatory processes which the flax underwent, were chiefly performed by the female branches of the family. The owner, his apprentices and journeymen, worked either at the loom, or in the field, as interest prompted, or the seasons dictated; and as, at this time, the demand almost invariably exceeded the supply of linen, high remunerative prices were obtained. This may perhaps be regarded as "the golden age" of the linen weavers of Ireland.

As soon as prices diminished below their capacity to sustain so heavy a deduction as 25 per cent. for the one ingredient of wages, from the gross value of the article produced, the master weaver, as he may be termed, necessarily disengaged himself of his journeymen, and confined his looms to his apprentices or children, in whose labour he possessed the property. The journeyman, thus compelled to beat out for new employment, obtained, where practicable, a loom of his own, and set to work for himself, or fell into the already overburthened ranks of the common agricultural labourer.

When, in process of time, the unprecedented growth and rivalry of the cotton manufacture forced down still lower the prices of linen, it became obvious that cheaper production was essential, not alone to the permanency, but to the prolonged existence of the trade.

The formation of large establishments for spinning yarn by machinery, and the comparative evenness and improvement in the quality, from that heretofore prepared by hand-labour, seemed one of the means best calculated to attain this great desideratum. Of this opportunity, capitalists have availed themselves to a considerable extent, not only in Ireland but in England and Scotland. Another obvious auxiliary was to concentrate the industry of individuals, so as to produce at less cost, and with greater certainty and in larger quantities, a uniform fabric, more likely to command a market than the chequered qualities produced by vast numbers of persons, each using different materials, and each producing a varied fabric, irresponsible of any existing demand for such peculiar fabric, when produced.

These considerations, with others to which I may have occasion hereafter to advert, have given birth to almost a new mode of manufacturing in Ireland, and have taken the greater proportion of the trade from the hands in which it was formerly exclusively held, namely, the operative weaver, and placed it in those of manufacturers, who now furnish the material to the weaver, to be woven at a stipulated price.

The vast increase in the number and respectability of such employers daily taking place, and a conviction that it must be mainly through the instrumentality of such a combination of capital, skill, and enterprize, directing and assisting industry, that the linen trade of the country can alone maintain itself against the competition of linen made abroad and cotton at home, induces me strongly to urge upon your attention the expediency of extending the powers of the present law for the protection of such important interests.

However applicable and adequate the present enactments might have been to the condition of the manufacture at the period of their establishment, they are, in the opinion of almost every practical man with whom I conversed, or whom I interrogated on the subject, totally incompetent to meet the present position and exigencies of the trade.

The law at present stands thus:

Persons embezzling, &c. linen yarn, &c. shall forfeit three times the value of the same.

27. And be it further enacted, that if any person entrusted with any linen yarn, hempen yarn, cotton yarn, or any one or more of those materials mixed with each other, or any tools, materials, or apparatus for manufacturing the same, shall fraudulently sell, pawn, or embezzle such linen yarn, hempen yarn, cotton yarn, or each or any of them respectively, or such tools, materials, or apparatus, every such offender, and the receiver of any such article knowing the same to be or have been so fraudulently sold, pawned, or embezzled, shall forfeit three times the value of the same.

28. And

28. And be it further enacted, that every weaver shall well and sufficiently weave all sound and sufficient linen yarn and cotton yarn and hempen yarn to him delivered to be woven, within such time, and in such reeds, and into cloth of such breadths as shall be agreed upon between the owner or owners of such yarn and such weaver, upon pain of forfeiting the full value of such yarn, or the full price agreed upon for weaving the same.

Weavers to fulfil their agreements on pain of forfeiting the value of the yarn.

29. And be it further enacted, that if any person or persons who shall be entrusted with any linen, or linen yarn or hempen yarn, or materials or tools or apparatus for manufacturing the same, shall refuse or neglect to return such yarn, materials, tools, or apparatus within 14 days after the same shall have been demanded by or in behalf of the owner thereof, such neglect or refusal shall be deemed and taken as embezzling under this Act.

Neglect to return yarn, &c. after fourteen days' notice, deemed as embezzling.

30. And be it further enacted, that in case any manufacturer shall make oath before a justice of the peace that he has entrusted any linen yarn, hempen or cotton yarn, or the materials, tools, or apparatus for manufacturing the same, to any person or persons, and that he has just cause to suspect and does suspect that such person is about to abscond with the same, then such justice shall have power and authority, at his discretion, to issue his warrant requiring such person or persons to restore the article or thing entrusted to him or them, and in default thereof to apprehend such person or persons, and bring him or them before him, or some other justice of the peace for the same county; and unless such person or persons shall give security for the return of the article or thing so entrusted to him or them within a time then mentioned, such justice shall, by warrant, order any constable to enter the house of such person or persons, and give possession of such article or thing to the owner thereof, such owner making such reasonable compensation for any labour expended therein or thereupon as to such justice shall seem proper.

Manufacturers making complaint on oath, justices may order search, and restore possession.

I shall first lay before you some of the most important evidence I received on these several clauses.

Mr. Alexander Barklie, secretary of the Londonderry county committee, a very extensive manufacturer and bleacher, says, "The practice of embezzling yarn prevails to a very great extent. There exist groceries and other shops, where weavers can always buy and sell their yarn, or exchange it for groceries or other goods. I think the law should require these shopkeepers to show where they obtained yarn found in their possession, and suspected of being stolen, particularly the boiled or bleached yarn. These persons all know well that the yarn in which they deal is embezzled."

Mr. John Adams, of the firm of Thomas Bennett & Co. of Ballydevitt, near Coleraine, says, "The manufacturers greatly need some further protection for their goods when in the hands of weavers. There is a great trade carried on in embezzled yarn, and some measures are required to check it. Persons dealing in yarn should, under certain circumstances, be compelled to prove where they obtained it."

Dr. Boyd, a magistrate, and sealmaster for Coleraine and Kilrea markets, states, "The punishment for embezzling yarn, and purchasing it, under the 27th section, is totally inadequate to the offence. It is merely a forfeit of three times the value of the property. The difficulties of obtaining justice are also strangely increased in the ratio of the extent of the robbery. For instance, if a weaver embezzles half-a-crown's worth of yarn, a magistrate has summary jurisdiction to convict him in three times that amount as a penalty; but if he embezzles or steals a whole web, and the value is 50*s.*, the penalty (three times that amount) brings it beyond 5 *l.*, and then justice can only be had through the court of the assistant barrister. Again, if a weaver embezzles to such an extent that the penalty would exceed 20 *l.*, then the case can only be tried in one of Her Majesty's superior courts of law. Thus the obstacles to immediate or summary and effective justice are increased with the amount of the robbery."

The clauses to which Dr. Boyd here adverts are the 32d and the 36th. Their peculiar operation was complained of by many other witnesses, some of whose testimony I shall hereafter recite. The clauses are as follow:

32. And be it further enacted, that all complaints which shall be made of any offence or offences committed against any of the regulations or directions contained in this Act, the penalty or forfeiture in respect whereof shall not exceed in amount or value the sum of five pounds, shall and may be heard by any one justice of the peace acting within his jurisdiction, or by the chief magistrate of town.

Complaints where penalty does not exceed 5 *l.* may be heard before a justice or a chief magistrate of a

of any town presiding in his court in such town; and for that purpose such justice or magistrate shall and may examine any person or persons upon oath; and in default of the payment of any such penalty or sum of money as shall be awarded by any such justice or chief magistrate by virtue of this Act upon the hearing of any such complaint, it shall and may be lawful for such justice or chief magistrate to levy the same, by warrant of distress under his hand and seal, on and off the goods and chattels of the person liable to the payment of such penalty or sum of money, rendering the overplus, if any, after payment of the costs and expences of such distress, to such person; and in case no sufficient distress shall be found, then to commit such person to gaol or to the house of correction for any period not exceeding one calendar month, unless such penalty or sum of money shall be sooner paid.

Penalties exceeding 5 *l.* and not exceeding 20 *l.* recoverable before assistant barrister.

Exceeding 20 *l.* by action, &c. in superior courts.

Venue to be laid in the county, &c. where penalties incurred.

36. And be it further enacted, that all penalties and forfeitures incurred under any clause or article in this Act, exceeding in amount or value five pounds, and not exceeding in amount or value twenty pounds, shall and may be sued for and recovered by any person who will sue for the same, by civil bill before the assistant barrister of the county in which the penalty or forfeiture shall have been incurred; and that all such penalties and forfeitures exceeding in amount or value twenty pounds, shall and may be sued for and recovered by any person who will sue for the same by suit or action at law, or by bill, plaint, or information in any of His Majesty's Courts of King's Bench, Common Pleas, or Exchequer in Ireland, wherein no essoign, protection, nor wager of law, nor more than one imparlance, shall be allowed; and that in all such actions, suits, or prosecutions which shall be brought or prosecuted for recovery of such forfeitures or penalties, the venue shall be laid in the county, or in the county of the city, or the county of the town wherein such forfeitures or penalties were incurred, and in none other.

Dr. Boyd continues: "The Act is moreover defective in the 14 days' notice required, by the 29th section, to be given a weaver to bring in the materials entrusted to him. If he fails in doing so, the justice can then issue his warrant against the goods of the weaver. Perhaps it is found that he has none. At all events he must get a return from the constable to this effect, before he is at liberty to issue another warrant to take the offender into custody. Then if he finds him after all this delay, which is so much time given him to get off, the punishment is but one calendar month's imprisonment without hard labour, unless the penalties (three times the value) be sooner paid.

"I have also had cases in which the lengths have been stamped upon the webs by the weavers themselves, as forgeries of the sealmaster's stamp, so as to make the webs appear and pass for 52 yards, when in fact and in truth they would not measure more than from 49 to 51 yards. There is no clause in the Act to meet these cases. I prosecuted some parties successfully, but it was under the common law statute of frauds, at a cost of several pounds. I was compelled to take the case by indictment to the general quarter sessions. More summary justice is what is required. The powers of the 19th section, if extended to persons putting on false lengths, would meet such cases as the above. These are the principal defects which I have noticed in the Act."

Mr. George Barklie, of Mullamore, says, "There seems to be a want of some more summary method of punishing persons found with stolen yarn or linen in their possession."

Mr. Samuel Smith, an extensive manufacturer at Londonderry, says, I would strongly urge the importance of further legislative protection being given to the property of manufacturers entrusted to the weavers. At present the means of checking embezzlement are found quite inadequate to the suppression of the offence. The delays in getting in work are most injurious, and the most secure remedy would be to place some extended and summary powers in the hands of one magistrate. It would also be desirable to frame further enactments for the punishment of persons receiving or purchasing stolen or embezzled materials. The law as it stands is very defective on this point."

Messrs. William Orr & Sons, of Loughgall, near Armagh, say, "Further security is required to enable manufacturers to recover property entrusted to weavers. At present the law is very defective on that point. A petition to Parliament on this subject was got up some time ago by the manufacturers and bleachers attending Armagh market, but it was not, I think, ultimately presented. A great deal of embezzled yarn is sold at Armagh, and is a great

injury

injury to trade. It is often given, in grocers' and spirit shops, in exchange for goods or spirits. The extent of this trade is notorious."

Mr. William Kirk, of Annvale, near Keady, states, "I believe that there is a good deal of the yarn embezzled which is given out to be woven, and that the quality of the article is deteriorated in consequence. The present law does not give an adequate facility to master manufacturers for the recovery of property entrusted to weavers. I think the power of justices at petty sessions should be increased (see sec. 32) from one month, to not less than one, nor more than six months' imprisonment, with hard labour."

Mr. Joseph M'Kee, of Millview, county Armagh, says, "I consider there is a great deal of embezzlement of yarn by weavers, winders, and their families. The present law is not sufficient to check the buying and selling of stolen yarns. I would recommend imprisonment at hard labour instead of the present law, for all persons that would buy or sell stolen yarns, or have them in their possession, it not being the poorer part of the community that deal in these stolen goods, but persons that can well pay the fine when convicted, and who resume their old course the next day. Nearly all the complaints and convictions that I ever knew of for buying or selling stolen yarn, were against the proprietors of whisky shops, or country grocers. When they are convicted, the fine is nothing in comparison to what they make by dealing in these stolen goods. They do not consider it a shame to be fined; where imprisonment, in my opinion, would nearly put a stop to it altogether.

Mr. John Crouch, linen manufacturer, Belfast, says, "On Saturday last, a bleacher purchased from me four pieces. The previous day he had bought one piece of the same article from a weaver, who makes his own goods, at 10*d.* a yard less than he bought it of me. The materials must have been improperly obtained, as the price got for it was less than the first cost of the materials honestly purchased. I have been told that there is a regular system of purchasing stolen linen yarn, and selling it to weavers who make up their own goods. The practice is for the small manufacturer, who has from two to six looms employed, to purchase warp honestly, and then to weft his goods with stolen materials. I do not think that, at present, the system is carried on to an extent greatly to affect prices, but it will do so, if not checked. It is latterly increasing very much."

Mr. James Murland of Castlewellan, states, "I have not a doubt that the manufacturer loses a good deal of the weft yarns intrusted to the weavers, which operates against the honest tradesman, as, in consequence of the embezzlement of weft, manufacturers have to establish lower prices for weaving, as a prudent manufacturer must calculate to have a profit beyond the loss he sustains by these petty thefts. It is extremely difficult at the present time to punish the buyers of embezzled yarn, in consequence of the manufacturers not being able to identify their property. I think an Act to oblige persons to account for how boiled yarn came into their possession would be of great use, as, in every place where there are weavers employed, there are persons who will receive, at an under value, odd hanks of yarn stolen from the manufacturers, and yet these people cannot be punished. At one time there was a law of the same kind to protect bleachers; persons having linen in an unfinished state, had to account how it came into their possession, or suffer a penalty."

Walter Malony, esq., the resident magistrate for the Belfast district, says, on this subject, "The Linen Act applies to the cotton trade only from the 27th section. There the words 'cotton yarn' are introduced, which, in some measure, applies it to that branch of trade. Under this section, any person 'selling, pawning, or embezzling,' any kind of yarn, tools, or apparatus, with which they are entrusted, are liable to a penalty of three times the value of the same. In the recovery of that penalty, the greater the amount of robbery a manufacturer sustains, the greater is the difficulty of obtaining the punishment of the individual robbing him. Any sum under 5*l.* is recoverable in a summary manner before the magistrate. If between 5*l.* and 20*l.*, the proceeding must be by civil bill. If 5*l.* cannot be levied, there is alternative punishment by imprisonment for a month; but if the 5*l.* be exceeded, and there are no goods to distrain upon, there is no alternative punishment by imprisonment. If the amount of robbery or embezzlement exceed 20*l.*, the cause can only be determined in the

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superior courts in Dublin. The same section of the Act applies also to the receiver of this property, so stolen. I have heard it frequently alleged in Belfast, that a great traffic is carried on in stolen yarn; but the difficulty of putting it down is, that it is next to impossible to identify the yarn so stolen. A man who has been robbed may know very well where his yarn has been carried, but the owner would not take upon himself to swear that the yarn was his. You might as well expect a man to swear to potatoes. As to a man being required to prove how he got possession of yarn alleged to be stolen, there is a precedent under Mr. Peel's Act (the Timber Act), whereby a man having fresh timber in his possession is compelled to show how he became possessed of it. If a person made oath that he had been robbed of yarn, and that he suspected a particular individual to be in possession of it, I should think if the magistrate granted a search warrant, and yarn was found in the possession of this individual, answering in quality and quantity to that stolen, that he might be required, without unfair interference with the liberty of the subject, to show how he came into possession of it."

Mr. Malony has paid great attention to the laws affecting the manufactures of Ireland, and particularly to those regulating the complaints, &c. between masters and workmen. His services and exertions will be brought more fully before you, when I come to treat on the cotton trade of Belfast.

Having recommended that the office of sealmaster be abolished, and that the appointment of inspectors be vested in other hands, I propose to deprive the linen committees of counties of the patronage they possess, and thereby remove, I think, the only ground on which their continued existence could be regarded as either useful or desirable.

Though numbering among their members many persons of high respectability and great intelligence, their powers of usefulness are so limited, and the scope of their duties so circumscribed, their meetings for purposes of business so rare, and, when held, ordinarily so thinly attended except on special occasions, when patronage is to be exercised, that I am satisfied no well grounded opposition to their dissolution could be offered, even from the committees themselves, if the appointments which they are now directed to make, of the sealmasters and inspectors, were abrogated, or elsewhere vested. I HAVE THEREFORE NO HESITATION IN RECOMMENDING, THAT THE POWER AND AUTHORITY OF THE LORD LIEUTENANT OF IRELAND, TO APPOINT LINEN COMMITTEES OF COUNTIES IN WHICH THE MANUFACTURE OF LINEN IS CARRIED ON, BE ANNULLED, AND SUCH COMMITTEES ABOLISHED.

It remains for me to lay before you a draft of the Act I propose to substitute in lieu of the present statutory regulations*. Before doing so, however, I must disclaim being regarded as following the bent of my personal opinions or impressions. These would lead me simply and unequivocally to urge the entire repeal of the Act regulating the linen manufacture of Ireland, and to leave the manufacture of that country to the same freedom from legislative restraint enjoyed by the rival manufactures of England and Scotland, and which, in the case of the latter especially, I have shown to have been conducive to such advantageous results.

I must not however disguise from you, that these views are not generally entertained by "the trade" in Ireland; and that the great portion of this body still look to legislative regulation as essential to the well-being and protection of their interests.

(*Vide Appendix, page 731.)

LINEN MANUFACTURE, IRELAND.

Part III.—Condition of Persons engaged in it.

In proceeding to the consideration of the condition of the linen-weavers of Ireland, embraced within the circuit of my inspection, it will be desirable to divide them into four classes, and to remark on each separately.

1. Weavers working on their own account, or, as it is technically expressed, for the market, and occupying, besides, small holdings of land.
2. Cottier weavers, working for manufacturers without possessing land.
3. Weavers working for manufacturers, and having land.
4. Weavers working for manufacturers in weaving-shops or factories.

The first of these classes, 40 years ago, formed almost the exclusive producers of linen cloth in Ireland. They still form a considerable body in the province of Ulster, more especially in the districts around the markets of Ballymena, Ballymoney, and Coleraine, which are noted for the sale of the finest qualities of linen. They usually possess from one to three looms, and their holdings of land vary from one to seven or eight acres. In the winter season, and in those periods of the year which afford cessation from agricultural occupation, the loom is resorted to for employment. The weaver either grows and prepares his own yarn, or purchases it, and when converted into cloth carries his web to the market, and disposes of it to the merchant or bleacher, for whatever may be the market price of the day.

To enable the Board clearly to understand the mode in which this business is carried on, it may be desirable to afford a brief graphical description of an Irish linen-market. The markets are ordinarily held either in the common market-place, as at Coleraine; in the street, as at most places; in an inclosed yard, as in Derry and Armagh, or in a covered building specially appointed for the purpose, as at Drogheda.

When a linen-market commences, the buyers each stand upon separate stools, or benches, elevated about two feet from the ground, with a table before each of them from five to seven feet in length, and from two to four feet in breadth. On the fronts of these tables the names of the individual or firm occupying them is occasionally painted. The weavers, each bearing their webs, or pieces of linen, crowd round these buyers, and present them on the tables for their inspection and purchase. Each piece of linen is now, by Act of Parliament (Linen Act, sec. 6), exposed for sale in open folds, so that the purchaser may judge of its quality throughout, the former practice being to present it tied round closely, so as to prevent minute inspection; and the buyer, after an apparent very hasty examination asks, "What will buy this web?" "1*s.* 2½*d.*," perhaps is the reply, meaning that sum per yard. "I should think so," says the buyer, "and a deal less; will 1*s.* 1*d.* buy it?" "Sorrow one of me will let it go for the likes o' that," says the seller. "Take it away then," is the hasty response. The weaver does so, and carries it to the next buyer's table, where something like the same colloquy takes place. By the time he has gone through this ceremony at three or four tables, he knows pretty well what is the day's market price of his web, and he then disposes of it to the buyer who has offered him the highest price. The purchaser then marks with a pen or pencil, on the outside fold, his initials or signature, and the rate per yard at which the weaver consents to sell, and he to buy it.

Every regular buyer has some house or place (very frequently a public-house) to which all the weavers from whom he has purchased webs in the course of the

market carry them, and receive payment in ready money the same afternoon. Twopence is deducted from the amount of each web from the seller, to pay the purchaser's rent of this paying-house, and is known in the trade as the "house twopence." This, with the sealmaster's fee of 2 *d.*, is a deduction of 4 *d.* for each web, to which the large manufacturers are not subjected*.

It would seem, from the above method of transacting his business, that the linen-weaver of Ireland, who is working on his own account, has the fairest opportunity of obtaining at all times the market value of his labour. By selecting and purchasing his own materials at as cheap a rate as he can, and by subsequently working them up into cloth, in his own way, and at his own convenience, and afterwards carrying his web to a public market, where there will usually exist adequate competition among purchasers to prevent undue advantage being taken of him, he appears to occupy as fair a position as can be expected. It may also be stated, that there are now few districts in the province of Ulster in which there are not found manufacturers who deliver out materials to be woven into cloth at a fixed rate per web, or per yard. A weaver may always ascertain (for it is matter of notoriety usually) what rate any particular manufacturer is paying for the various sorts of goods he is engaged in producing; and if he finds, upon calculation of the time occupied in weaving a web of any given set, and the rate of wages paid for it, that he could earn more by weaving for a manufacturer than for himself, he has the opportunity of taking out such work. Again, those weavers who ordinarily weave for manufacturers, may, whenever refused work by their employers, obtain materials, and weave a web on their own account, and dispose of it for what it will fetch in the public market; thus being at all times within the reach of employment, though, of course, at varied rates of remuneration for his labour.

The above view, however, of the condition of the market weaver must be regarded as presented in the most advantageous light, because it must be remembered that the remuneration of this class of weavers is governed solely by prices. The balance between the comparative cost of the materials he uses in preparing his web, and the market value or selling price of it when finished, is the exact sum left as the recompense or reward of his own labour.

These prices are constantly fluctuating, and as frequently influenced by many causes beyond his control. Scarcity of demand, or excess of supply; dearness of materials, or cheapness of labour; the resort of the capitalist, or wholesale producer, to distant and cheaper markets for the purchase of his raw or prepared material, inaccessible, and probably even unknown to the rural weaver, are each, and alike, governing causes of the amount he can obtain for his exertions; for at whatever rate the large manufacturer, who purchases his yarn wholesale at long credit, of the best qualities, and at the best market †, who can put it out to be wove into cloth at the places where, from any causes, labour is lowest,—and who, besides, possesses every advantage which cultivated skill or ingenuity can afford,—at whatever price such a person can bring a piece of linen of a given quality into the market, the country weaver can only meet or compete with him there by accepting the same terms. Competition thus engendered and assisted, often operates most disastrously on the interests of the weaver, who frequently finds that, when he brings his web into the market for sale, after the fortnight or three weeks' labour which he has spent in producing it, he can obtain for it little more than the cost, to him, of the materials comprised in it, or such an addition as leaves his labour most inadequately recompensed.

Already the advantages of concentrated capital, and ingenuity and enterprise, over the isolated efforts of the lowly and industrious rural weaver, are rapidly developing themselves in Ireland, and day by day are transplanting the loom from the cabin of the cottier to the factory or weaving-shop of the manufacturer. Throughout

* The total deductions from the poorer class of weavers on these heads, is estimated to amount to many thousand pounds annually.

† The terms of the leading linen yarn merchants at Leeds are six months' credit. Benyon & Co.'s terms are, "Payment in four months from date of invoice by bill on London at two months. Interest allowed for earlier payment at the rate of five per cent. per annum, or charged at this rate, if deferred." Messrs. Hives & Atkinson's terms, "Payment in a two months' banker's bill at four months from date of invoice, or discount allowed at six per cent. per annum for anticipated payment. Interest charged at five per cent. per annum for over credit." Messrs. Marshall's are nearly similar.

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Throughout the counties of Down, Antrim, Derry and Armagh, many thousand weavers, formerly weaving for the market, are now in the regular employ of manufacturers, and though they still retain their looms, have no property in the materials in them. Almost all of those who yet continue weaving on their own account, combine the character of small farmers, and retain the loom as an auxiliary to their agricultural operations*.

These are frequently occupied, first by one member of the family, and then by another, as leisure from other pursuits or inclination admit; and their comparatively small and inadequate earnings are so seasonable and valuable an addition to the domestic resources of the household, as to place them beyond the verge of absolute penury or want.

It will be obvious to the Board, that means thus acquired, and necessarily so constantly fluctuating in their amount, and on which the demands for support or assistance are as varied as the numbers, and other extraneous resources, of the family, prevent anything like an accurate scale being prepared of what would be the average earnings by the looms of families thus circumstanced. I subjoin the evidence of an extensive employer in the county Down, which shows the highest alleged rate of earnings I met with. It is that of an exporting house engaged in the manufacture of the finest qualities of linens. You may judge of the redundancy of labour there from the fact of 700 weavers working *without any stipulated rates of wages;* and from Mr. Murland's statement, that he is erecting spinning machinery which will give employment to 400 or 500 additional hands, *which he considers the neighbourhood will readily supply.*

Mr. James Murland, of Annesborough, Castlewellan, examined:—"I am a linen yarn spinner, bleacher, and manufacturer. I have been engaged in the linen business near 40 years, and about 14 of this in manufacturing. I am now employing about 700 hand-loom weavers. They are of all ages and sexes, and about two-thirds would be able-bodied men. They all weave at their own houses and find their own looms and gearing. We make from the coarsest to the finest linens made: from 5^{00} to 25^{00}'s, all varieties of lengths and breadths. Our wages would vary according to the quality of the article made. We deliver out a ticket with our work to the weaver in the following form:—

		lbs.	oz.
No.	24 Hd.	5	8
Breadth 34½ In.	65 Weft.	4	8

No wages promised. Weaving paid according to the manner the work is executed. Four weeks allowed for working; if more, 2 *d.* per day will be taken off the wages. Tallow must not be used in dressing; and if candle grease, or oil from spindle, be on the linen, there will be a heavy fine.

August 21, 1838. *J. Murland.*

We

* I found it extremely difficult to obtain any correct estimate of the falling off of the quantities of linen sold in the several public markets. With the exception of Ballymena, Ballymoney, and Coleraine, almost every market was admitted to have greatly declined. At Londonderry I obtained the subjoined Return, which may be relied on for accuracy.

A Return of the Linen sold in the Market of *Londonderry.*

LINEN.	YEARS.									
	1810	1820	1830	1832	1833	1834	1835	1836	1837	To Oct. 24, 1838
Number of Webs -	29,432	22,184	20,633	16,721	18,660	16,957	14,427	14,645	10,460	9,658

Londonderry, Cumber Clanag, 26 October 1838. *Hugh H. Handcock.*

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"We never promise wages, but pay according to the manner in which the work is executed. We have never been summoned by a weaver before the magistrates. The average earnings of the whole of our weavers would be from 6 *s.* to 7 *s.* weekly, from which must be deducted the winding of the weft, which however is usually done by members of their own families. Some of our weavers will earn as much as 10*s.* to 12 *s.*; many earn 10 *s.*

"The majority of our weavers live in the country, and at least two-thirds of them have small holdings of land or good gardens. At harvest and seed time we give out less work than at other times. We do not complain of not getting in our work in the time specified on the ticket. Out of the 700 weavers, not 20 are now behind time. We impose a fine of 2 *d.* per day for delay, and invariably enforce it unless the weaver produce a doctor's or a clergyman's certificate satisfactorily accounting for the delay. This practice we have found quite as beneficial to the weaver as to ourselves, and it is not at all complained of. We never find difficulty in getting weavers, but latterly they have been more in demand. I have never heard them make any reference to this commission, nor do I think they are aware generally of its existence. If they were, I do not think they would have or make any complaints, as I never knew the trade more even, or more healthy than at present. There will always exist the embezzlement of weft as long as weavers work at their own houses, but we think that we are better off in that respect than employers in many other places. We also employ about 300 hands in our spinning establishment by power. The power is both water and steam. The dimensions of our water-wheel are 50 ft. 6 in. diameter with 10 feet fall. We estimate it from 140 to 160 horse power. We have not any difficulty in getting hands for our factory above 13 years of age. None are working short time under the Factory Act. A few of the factory hands are the children of our hand-loom weavers. They will earn from 2 *s.* 6 *d.* to 6 *s.* weekly. Girls at 17, if working steadily, will make, under us, about 4 *s.* weekly at the hand-loom. We take in cloth twice in the week at home, and twice at Kilkeele. We pay entirely in money, and have no barter or shop account. We never make any advances to our weavers, or pay for the work before it is brought home. There was an employer in this neighbourhood who advanced money on the work before it was finished, but he failed some time back, and his weavers owed him a considerable sum. Contrasting the respectable industrious weaver with the same class of agricultural labourer, the weaver would be in the best situation. The general average of agricultural wages about here is 4 *s.* 7 ½ *d.* to 5 *s.* 6*d.* weekly. 5 *s.* 6 *d.* is called gentlemen's wages. We pay that rate ourselves. Within the last five years the number of hand-loom weavers has increased in this neighbourhood. Many new looms have been made, and all are now engaged. Our regular weavers get constant employment from us. We are adding to our establishment for spinning, and when the machinery is got into it we shall probably employ 400 or 500 additional hands. We anticipate that the neighbourhood will supply our wants. We are in a perfectly tranquil state, and consider person and property more secure here than in England.

"I have built a school-house on my own premises, under the patronage of the National Board. The master receives 8 *l.* and the mistress 6 *l.* salary. I give them besides a free house and garden, and five guineas annually. The scholars pay 1 *d.* a week. There are 44 boys and 33 girls now educating. Many of them are the children of persons in our employ, and the school is open to children of all denominations, and there is a good feeling between all."

The next class of linen-weavers whose condition I propose to examine, are,

2. Cottier weavers, working for manufacturers, and not possessing land.

These form now the largest class of weavers in Ireland, and are of a very mixed character; among them are many persons who formerly were in the first class, that is, of weavers who wove on their own account for the market, but finding it impracticable to compete with the larger manufacturers, for the reasons I have already adduced, or less remunerative than working for them, have abandoned the market, and now regularly weave for employers. Others of them are a class of young men, who, under the parental roof or elsewhere, have acquired a knowledge of weaving, but do not possess a capital (small though its requisite amount) adequate to the purchase of materials to enable them to weave on their own account.

The

The condition of this class also partakes of nearly as much variety as the first class, and is influenced by almost as many causes. Where a family has two or three looms, and is working under a master who gives them pretty constant employment, and furnishes them with materials of a fair quality, their condition will be good and comfortable. Others again, who have but one loom, and who are employed on coarse or heavy work, ordinarily the lowest paid, with perhaps four or five children to maintain, each too young to earn anything, will be found in the most abject state of misery and distress.

Between these two extremes, there is every intermediate stage in the relative condition of the weavers. I subjoin some of the principal evidence received on this part of the subject, which I have selected in order to illustrate the great diversity of condition existing, and as bearing on the several states of each description. In some instances I have given the testimony of the employers; in others, that of the operatives. The former speak generally of the money amount of wages they pay; the latter can best explain and feel the extent of the social or domestic claims upon these amounts, and how far they are adequate to meet or alleviate them.

Jonathan Richardson, esq., examined.—I am senior partner in the firm of Richardson & Smith, of Londonderry; we are linen manufacturers and bleachers, the latter carried on under the name of T. & J. Richardson; we are employing about 1,080 weavers at present. Our average number would be 1,000. We prepare the yarn, and have about 150 other persons employed in this operation; we make from 9^{00} to 28^{00} varied breadths, 7/8, 4/4, 5/4 and 12/4 light and strong. The 12/4 is the sheeting without seam.

The average earnings of our weavers would be 6 *s.* weekly, clear of deductions; the average number of looms possessed by each family, from one and a half to two each. About one-fourth of our weavers have small farms, the remainder are cottiers; they usually weave the whole year, except in spring and autumn; at the former season they go for cropping and turf-cutting, and in the latter for harvest and potato digging; the time would vary from three to five weeks each, according to the inclemency or otherwise of the season; the average time in which a web might be made would be three weeks, but our weavers would take five, which we consider less time than is usually taken by other persons' weavers. Comparing the present with the past condition of the weaver, I think that he is in a more comfortable and independent situation than he was. Some years ago (about 12), a class of men existed in this country, who had a capital of about 500 *l.* to 1,000 *l.*; these men would purchase up the yarn, boil it, and sell it out to the weavers at exorbitant profit, generally on credit till the web was wove and sold in the public market. If prices were down, the weaver would get very little for his labour. At that time there were no manufacturers in this country, except the damask manufacture of Messrs. Colston of Lisburn, and perhaps a few others of inferior note, who were carrying on their business by giving out yarn and taking in the cloth. That system was introduced at Lisburn about 12 years ago, and has since been gradually and is now extensively followed; I think this system more beneficial to the weaver than the former one; I judge so from the fact, that the market is now, as formerly, open to the weaver; he can buy his yarn if he prefer it, and manufacture on his own account, but we find at all times that we can get more weavers than we want. In almost every district there is an agent or seller of yarn, who would supply the weavers on credit, if they found it more advantageous to manufacture for themselves, and sell in the public market. I consider the introduction of mill-spinning into this country the only thing that has saved our fine linen trade. We formerly had the coarse also, but as soon as the Scotch commenced the mill-spinning, we lost that coarse trade, and the fine was following it, until the introduction of mill-spun yarn from Leeds enabled the manufacturers in this country so to conduct and regulate their business as to retain the remnant which was still in their hands. They are now spinning both here and in Belfast. I was in France in March and April of the present year (1838). We are shipping linens and yarn extensively to that country. I found a great desire for increased commercial intercourse between the two countries, and was satisfied that any measures which could tend to increase that feeling would be highly beneficial to Ireland. It is a great consuming country for linen; all the yarns which have been spun for the last two years in England, Scotland and Ireland, and used to find a channel in the American market, have been shipped for France.

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John Duff, townland Aughauleague, Laghore parish, county Armagh.—I am a weaver, and have been so for nearly 40 years. The weavers generally are so poor that they cannot weave for the market as they formerly did, but are compelled to take work from the manufacturers at whatever they can get. I remember when we had but two manufacturers in this part of the country, and they paid good prices. I think this increase of manufacturers has very much lessened the earnings of the poor; it has also produced a competition among them which reduced prices, and with it wages; it has also deteriorated the quality of the goods. If a poor man has a shed or hovel to live in, he must pay for it weekly, and to do so he must work at whatever prices he can get. The poverty of the people, and their numbers, always places it in the hands of the masters to pay what they please; a man can do nothing for himself; a 12^{00} takes a man six or eight days to weave with a hand-shuttle, but rather less with the fly-shuttle. The majority now use the fly-shuttle. About Laghore they make from 3^{00} to 5^{00}, and earn from 2 *s.* downwards weekly; about 6 *d.* a set would be the average rate of weaving, but rather more as you get to the higher numbers. Great loss has been sustained by the weavers' families being thrown idle, owing to the substitution of the mill yarn. Formerly a hand spinner would get 4½ *d.* to 4 *d.* a hank for spinning, and now they have about 1½ *d.* or 2 *d.* at the outside a hank where they got it to do, but that is seldom the case now. I buy hand-spun in this market, and give from 16 *d.* to 18 *d.* for the best kind. It is to be got from 3 *d.* a hank to 4½ *d.* The machinery has thrown our families idle. The average earnings of all our weavers would not exceed 3 *s.* 6 *d.* a week, and that is with an attendant as winder. The old weavers were formerly bound as apprentices, generally for three years; at present there is no binding by indenture in this neighbourhood. All girls of 13 to 15 years of age hereabout are weavers, and have nothing else to do; their wheels are now thrown by. It would be desirable to make provision for apprenticeship in the weaving trade; it would give better workmen.

Henry Adams, examined.—I am a linen-weaver residing at Coleraine; I work on my own account; I bought my last warp (mill-spun) at the warehouse, and my weft in the market. The last web I made was a 15^{00} 7/8 wide, and 52 yards long. I had 12½ spangle of yarn for weft, at an average of 21 *d.* per spangle. I had 11 spangle and 1 hank of mill-spun yarn for warp, at 2 *s.*; these were both of fine qualities. Having got my yarn, I next purchase 8 lbs. of kelp for boiling, that would cost 16 *d.*; 14 lbs. of mango, for whitening, at 1 *d.* a pound, 14 *d.*; 5 lb. of black soap for bleaching, at 4 *d.*, 20 *d.*; flour for dressing and tallow would cost 8 *d.*; there would then be the firing for boiling, say 1 *s.* These are expenses belonging to the web before we sit down to wind. There would be then the attendance of a person upon these several processes for at least a week. Then a person a day and a half to wind it. The weaving would take three weeks close work. With the week's preparation, that would be a month's labour for the adult. Besides this, he would require one of the younger branches of the family for the three weeks he was weaving to wind the weft. I sold that piece in the market at 1 *s.* 3 *d.* a yard, which was 3 *l.* 5 *s.* The 4 *d.* deducted for the sealmaster and "the house," reduces it to 3 *l.* 4 *s.* 8 *d.*, and the expenses as above amount in total to 51 *s.* 2½ *d.*, leaving clear but 13 *s.* 5½ *d.* for labour, and to maintain my family. I have a wife and eight children, all healthy and stout, to maintain. Where one weaver earns as much as I do, many weavers earn less. My reason for using mill-yarn at all is, that the country-spun yarn is now so badly woven, owing to being so badly remunerated, that incompetent persons only are set to spin it; it often breaks a weaver's heart to work it. I would do (weave) two pieces with mill-spun yarn, to one I could weave with the hand-spun. We can get 17 hank mill-spun yarn, which here we could not get at all by hand. One winder could wind as much mill-spun yarn as two winders could wind of the hand-spun. The colour is also very superior. Ireland was never so full of linen weavers as she is at this moment. That greatly tends to reduce wages and to fill the market with cloth, which has reduced prices and wages. We never made goods so excellent in quality as at present, and yet prices of fine linen, 18^{00} are from 10 *d.* to 11 *d.* a yard down since June and July. What was then 2 *s.* 4 *d.* to 2 *s.* 5 *d.* is now but 1 *s.* 6 *d.* The reason may be, that the season for bleaching is over. The fine linen cannot be exposed as in the summer months, for fear of getting torn by the wind. Many good weavers have sought shelter in the western shores of America,

America, and at this very day there are hundreds who would not take three hours to consider it, were there shipping provided to take them out, as in 1825. No man can be of any use to himself, or to others, as a weaver, unless he serves an apprenticeship to the trade. No man could take up weaving without a year's training. Every child of a weaver is put upon the loom. We have excellent opportunities of educating our children in Coleraine, but cannot avail ourselves of them. We have to take our children to employment at the earliest age. I wove three coarse webs, I have heard my father say, before I was 12 years of age. There is no binding by regular indentures of apprenticeship now. It is fathers putting their children on to the looms that adds so greatly to the numbers. There can be no doubt it would be beneficial to require previous apprenticeship. Anything that diminishes the numbers would be desirable; it would bring the trade into a wholesome state; the work would be better done, and better prices could be afforded than at present. I went out to Canada in 1837; I sailed the 7th of May, from Londonderry, in the ship Atlantic; I paid my own passage, and left my family at home in Ireland. I wanted to see the country; whether it was good for a poor man to go to or not. I landed at Quebec 10th of June, and from thence went to Toronto, in Upper Canada. I met with many weavers who had gone from this country. I remained for 10 weeks at Toronto, employed all the time, and then went over to Lake Simco. I found very many English settlers at Toronto, and all up that country, the greatest part of whom had been sent out by the English Poor-law Commissioners. It would be a great blessing if the new Poor-law Commissioners for Ireland would do as well as the Poor-law Commissioners for England have done, and send some of the poor out to Canada; I am sure thousands would gladly accept of such an offer. I found the English poor (pauper) settlers fast clearing their own pieces of land; they will clear about eight acres in the winter season, when work is not to be had generally for wages, as in the summer months. I went to most of the houses of the English settlers; they were comfortable and cleanly. I never saw one that had not a boarded floor, and hereabouts one never sees one that has. Many good, loyal men, and faithful subjects of Queen Victoria, would most cheerfully go out to Canada if offered to them. I was alarmed at the rebellion which was just commencing, and that only; and a desire again to see my family, all of whom I had left behind, induced me to come home. I would very thankfully embrace the opportunity of going out again if offered to me, and so would my family. I never had illness of any sort the whole time I was out. I regard Canada as a good country for poor people; they should be maintained for the first year after landing, and then they would do well; that was done by those who were sent out in 1825–26; they had five quarters victualling and tools. The same I found was done by the Dutch settlers who were located beyond Lake Simco; they were also victualled for a season, but I cannot say how long. I could instance many cases, had I time, of the most astonishing success of emigrants, and of the comforts they enjoy.

John Adams, Esq., examined.—I belong to the firm of Messrs. Thomas, Bennett & Co., of Ballydevith, Bleach Green. In the neighbourhood of Coleraine, county Derry, the reed is on 37 inches. In the county Down, the county Armagh, and part of Antrim, it is on 40 inches. This will show a difference of nearly one-tenth (if 36 inches, instead of 37, it would be exactly one-tenth), making the Coleraine 9^{00} nearly equal in fineness to the county Down, and Armagh 10^{00} and our 18^{00} to their 20^{00}. This is important to bear in mind in computing the relative amount of wages paid in the two districts. I think 5*s.* a week would be a fair calculation for the average earnings of our weavers per loom, that is clear of all deductions, and assuming that they do a fair week's work. In the fine sorts, they would make more and in the coarser lower. The latter work is mostly done by weavers and apprentices; there are many weavers' apprentices in this neighbourhood, but they are seldom, if ever now, regularly bound by indenture. Some give all their earnings for a given time to the person who teaches them to weave; others give a sum of money to be taught, 10*s.* or 20*s.* or so. I do not regard it as any evil their not being apprenticed regularly, as if we find a bad hand, we set him to coarse work, and fine where it is not properly executed; in time, they become good weavers. The fines imposed by manufacturers are rarely as much as the difference in value between a good and an indifferently wrought piece of linen sold in the public markets, and this the weavers know right well. Our per-centage of fines on the amount of wages

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we pay, I find is 3 *l.* 13 *s.* per 100 *l.*; but if the premiums beyond wages which we give for superior work be deducted, it reduces the amount to two-and-a-half per cent. We employ upwards of 200 weavers, working on from 9^{00} to 22^{00}'s.

Thomas Steel, examined.—I am a weaver at Culderry, and am working for Messrs. Alexander and George Barklie. I have brought home to-day (12 Oct.) a web I had out the 6th July. I have three-and-a-half acres of land, for which, with house, I pay 5 *l.* a year rent. I could have finished the web I brought home to-day in 14 days, though I have had it out since the 6th July. The reason of the delay was, I bought some warp and weft, and made some webs, which I carried to market. I got the materials on credit, and adopted this course to raise money to pay my rent. I am to get 15 *s.* for weaving this piece, which I did in 14 days. (This weaver was afterwards fined 2 *s.* for the delay above adverted to).

John Peacock, of Knockintarn, examined.—I am working for Messrs. Richardson & Smith, of Largy Green, as well as my two sons, one is aged 29 and the other 16 last birthday. My lad at 16 is weaving a 21^{00} 7/4, for which he is paid 25 *s.* per web and 2 *s.* 6 *d.* premium. My lad will do it in 24 days' regular work. I am on 18^{00} 7/8 which will take me as long. We work from six in the morning till about ten at night. It was not as easy to do work formerly as now; the yarn is better than it was; hand-spinning is so badly paid, that they do not take the tow off it as it formerly was. The mills take it off just as it should be; I began to use the mill yarn in 1827; I cannot get country yarn to my mind. I think it pays me better to work for a manufacturer than to buy my own yarn. We have it all ready to go to, and no bleaching to do or preparation.

Robert Hammond states, the merchants will not buy our cloth made from mill-spun yarn; they will if it be made of hand-spun yarn, but we cannot get that as cheap or work it so well as the mill-spun; sometimes we may cheat them by using the mill-spun for warp and the hand for weft, but if they knew it, they would not buy it. It is very seldom done I think; the flax is now almost all sent to or bought up by the spinning mills in towns, and the country weavers find a difficulty in getting hand-spun yarn. A woman that would formerly make 8 *d.* a day in spinning yarn by hand, would not now make a penny a day. This has greatly injured the farming interests as well as the weaving. Formerly the small farmers all spun yarn at home and wove besides. They would sow the flax and go through all the processes at home, and, by the produce of their cloth, pay their rents. They lived, that is maintained themselves, in the produce of their farms. In consequence of the decline of this sort of union trade, with farming, they cannot now pay their rents, and many of the small holdings are now in consequence being consolidated. I have known many such instances in my own place, and it is increasing every day. As a single man, I paid to one of these farmers and weavers 8 *l.* a year for my board and lodging; I had my own loom, and for the 8 *l.*, in addition to the board, lodging and washing, the farmer's family did my winding besides. Very many young single men did the same. At one time, I paid but 6 *l.* a year for all the above I have named, near Magherafelt; there is but little of this boarding going on at the present moment. It is about four years ago since I boarded for 6 *l.* I bought my own materials, and sold my own web. I am a single man still; I could have made a good match since I came to this town, but my sweetheart found out that I was a weaver, and would not have me. They know the weavers have not the means of keeping a wife and family, and no prudent lass would have one at all. When I paid 8 *l.* a year, I could sometimes make 5 *s.* a day. This was about six or seven years ago, or perhaps eight, all by linen weaving and from hand-spun yarn; I had then two or three good suits of clothes and a watch in my pocket, and sometimes 10 *l.* or 12 *l.* to the good; had I ever thought of my trade coming down from 5 *s.* a day to 4 *s.* 1 *d.* a week, I should have been more prudent than I was, but I lived respectably, and thought myself respectable; and that I should never be unable to get a living; I never thought of coming down to my present state.

The third class, whose condition I propose to consider, are the weavers working for manufacturers, and also holding land.

The money earnings of this class by the loom are regulated by the same scale, and influenced by the same causes and circumstances, as those weavers of whom I have treated in the last section. Their condition differs only from theirs in the additional benefit (if any), which they may derive from their possession of land. The mode of cultivation is, however, so defective in Ireland, and rents very

very frequently so high, that it is a question whether there is more gain derived from the land, than there is loss by the abstraction of labour from the loom. This part of the subject is of so much importance, and bears so directly upon the condition of the greater portion of the Irish working population—indeed, it may be said on the interests of all classes of society, that any suggestions for the cure of an evil of such magnitude, cannot be misplaced. It is a point to which the best and wisest men in Ireland have at all times, but more especially of late, turned their attention, as presenting one of the most efficient and ready means of improving the social condition of her people.

Sir Robert Bateson, Bart., of Londonderry, is eminently entitled to honourable mention, for his great exertions to promote a better system of farming in Ireland. The evidence I obtained from him appears so replete with sound practical information on this interesting subject, that I deem it my duty to submit it to you entire.—(*Vide Appendix, page* 742.)

I proceed to a consideration of the condition, &c., of the fourth class; namely, weavers working for manufacturers in weaving-shops or factories.

The congregating together of weavers in weaving-shops or factories is one of comparative recent introduction into Ireland, and at present seems to have taken firmer root in Belfast than in any other part of the country which I visited. This system, which is exceedingly distasteful to the operatives, particularly in those establishments where the strictness of factory discipline is attempted to be enforced, is nevertheless said to possess many peculiar advantages. It is represented—

1st. As ensuring regularity of employment and of production.

2d. Comparative uniformity of quality.

3d. As greatly preventing embezzlement or abstraction of materials.

4th. As stimulating to, and to some extent enforcing, regular and continuous labour, and thereby enabling the employers adopting the system to estimate pretty accurately the time in which they can execute a given order:

All these are points of considerable importance.

The establishments of this character are usually in the hands of persons extensively engaged in the manufacture, who must also possess a certain amount of capital. The buildings, looms, apparatus, and materials of all descriptions, are the property of the employer; and as he has a direct interest in constantly keeping his looms employed, from which source alone the amount of his capital invested must derive interest and profit, he has the strongest inducement to afford regular employment to his workpeople in the loom-shop, apart from many other considerations, such as injury to the looms and gearing from standing idle, &c., which would lead him to constant production. By the purchase of his own yarn, and delivering one sort to each of his weavers, if so disposed, and superintending the weaving of it day by day, he produces an uniform quality of linen, which enables him to take a large order for any peculiar kind, or to push into any particular market the exact quality and description for which his advices or information assure him there exists a demand. Much of the evidence I received was conclusive of the advantages which such opportunities place in the hands of the manufacturers.

Embezzlement of yarn is altogether prevented by the factory system, the weaver never having any in his own personal possession, that is, off the premises of his employer; has no means of abstracting it but by concealing it on his person when quitting his work. And the commission of this offence would not be embezzlement but theft; and instead of a forfeit of three times the value, the very inadequate penalty at present provided for the former offence, would subject the guilty offender to the much heavier punishment of imprisonment. The opportunities also of such abstraction are very considerably lessened by the circumstances of the workmen always being employed in the company of each other, and under the superintendence of a principal, or confidential servant, or overlooker. These considerations were frequently put forth as strong arguments in favour of the probable growth of this system of manufacture.

In all these establishments regular hours of labour are nominally insisted upon, and a constant disregard of them would lead to the discharge of the work-

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men. In some of them the hours of attendance are positively enforced by the outer doors of the workshop being kept locked during the hours of labour, and ingress and egress only being permitted at meal-times. These rather stringent regulations were much complained of by the workpeople, who, it was alleged, if accidently late five or ten minutes beyond the time allowed for any particular meal, would be kept out of their work till the time for admission after the next meal, and thereby perhaps lose a quarter or more of the day's labour. The regulation, however, was admitted generally to be productive of regular attendance, and proportionately to increase the amount of earnings of the workpeople thus steadily employed.

Of about 900 linen weavers in Belfast, nearly 700 were stated by Samuel M'Kenny, deputed to give evidence on their behalf, to be working in factories, or loom shops. The sail-cloth weavers could average about 1*s.* 6*d.* a day earnings; the fine weavers the same. This witness complained that different masters were paying different prices for the same sort of work, and all, more or less, he stated, made unfair abatements. As a remedy, he proposed the repeal of the corn laws, and, to give his own words,

"Next to the repeal of those bad laws, would be the abolition of those party ebullitions, such as celebrating the anniversaries of great butchers, like William the Conquerer, or falsely called Saints, such as St. Patrick; these promote disunion among the people, and perpetuate bad laws, which oppress the people and keep down their industry. We could soon repeal the corn laws had we unanimity, but we are divided by religious animosities, which impair the strength of the community.

"I am friendly to a Board of Trade, but there would be great difficulties in the way of its operation. A demand for labour must be the sole great cause of any improvement in our condition. As the producers of the wealth, we should have a fair share of the profits of the wealth we create. As it is, it all goes to the manufacturer; if prices fall, he reduces the weaver so as not to diminish his profits; if they rise he pockets all. I receive 10*s.* weekly; I take 6*s.* 6*d.* for my board, 1*s.* for a newspaper and a magazine; I have the rest for clothing. The people do not possess the means of moral cultivation which a wise and good government should give them; knowledge ought to be free; all taxes on literature should be taken off; I would repeal all the duties on newspapers. I do not think the weavers have any means of giving their children any education. I often work long hours to get a book or what I may want of that sort, but if I had a family I must go without it. The children are not clothed in a way as other mechanics' children are, and cannot attend schools as theirs' do. If they had the clothing, they have not the means of education at command. I have not spent 6*s.* in drink for six years, and can produce testimonials of character from all my employers, and yet I never have one shilling at command. If Government were to establish schools, there is so much religious animosity, that the plan must be a very liberal one to be encouraged. A plan on charity would not be as well received, as if every working man was placed within the power of paying for the education of his children, which he might be, if our old bungling laws were swept away, and good ones encouraging and fostering trade substituted in their stead; nevertheless, I would prefer a Government education to none at all. The weavers have been so much depressed, that they really do not know the value of education. Had I children, I would rather give them education in any creed, than leave them without any. When they arrived at maturity, they could judge for themselves."

James Malcolm and Joseph M'Murray, and John O'Neill, all Belfast weavers, working in factories, complained of the abatements made. They estimated the earnings of the weavers at about 1 *s.* a day clear.

Mr. *Francis M'Craken,* manufacturer of sail-cloth, Belfast.—I have 40 looms in one shop in Belfast, but only 24 employed, and men in the country. I make all numbers, from number nought to number eight, the finest and the coarsest made. I pay for dressed work 5 *s.* for a web of 40 yards, and all expenses, such as starch, winding, &c.; the hands will do from one to three webs in a week; a boy would do one; any man would do two easily; some of my very best workers will make three pieces. I pay 5*s.* 6*d.* for undressed work. I would never employ a man that could not live on his work. Linen trade is generally poorly paid, but it is the fault of the weavers; they are not industrious. Formerly the weavers got a fourth of the produce of what they made; but now it is generally paid

paid by the piece; I have known weavers do 30 yards of my work in a day. A good deal of my work is disposed of here, and some in America, Buenos Ayres and the West Indies. I have lately had an order from New South Wales, but I would not supply it, as I should have had 18 months nearly to wait for my money; and it is not worth my while at my time of life to scatter my property all over the world. I have paid the same rate of wages for the last 30 years, whether prices were high or low; I always give a fair rate, and never am guided by what others are paying. I never knew the trade as bad as it is at present; that is the sail-cloth manufacture. I do not get interest for my money now, where I once got a good deal more; prices have been brought down and profits reduced by the competition of the Dundee manufacturers. They do not pay lower wages, but rather higher; but the way they do business is this: about one-half of them fail every four or five years, and are always underselling the English and Scotch. There is a good deal more scheming there than there is here; they are bad materials; the webs are thinner, and the canvas half of it is only fit for padding; they pay more wages than I do, and yet can sell cheaper than I can make; they neither live themselves nor let others live; we try to make the best we can, and they try to make the cheapest.

My family introduced the cotton trade into Ireland in 1778 or 1779, and made the first piece of cotton cloth made in Ireland. We then paid more for weaving the cloth than you could now buy it for. We also introduced the fly-shuttle in this part of the country; we began with the hand-shuttle. Cotton spinning is leaving Ireland very fast. I quitted the cotton trade about 25 years ago; I found I could make no money by it. We spun, bleached and wove all ourselves when in the cotton way. Formerly every weaver bought his own yarn and his warp, made his web, brought it to the Linen-hall, and carried home his money in his pocket; this is going out, and large manufacturers have sprung up in the place of the many small ones. The condition of the weaver is greatly changed for the worse; the weavers have themselves to thank in a great measure; when trade was good formerly, and large orders were on hand, they would not work, and that brought in the use of machinery. The English manufacturer will always beat the foreigner by his superior skill and industry, and capital. Wages were reduced in this country by the injurious operation of the old system of poor laws in England, and the practice of ekeing out wages out of the poor rates. A manufacturer in England we will suppose paid a workman 5 *s.* a week, and he got another 5 *s.* from the poor rates; if I was paying 10 *s.* or even 8 *s.* or 9 *s.*, how was I to compete with him; this brought down wages very much in this country, in all descriptions of trades.

Mr. *Daniel Currall*, examined.—I am of the firm of Daniel Currall, jun. & Co., linen and cotton manufacturers of Belfast. We employ part of our hands in a factory, about 80, and the remainder in the country districts. We make in the factory coarse sheetings and heavy drills; in the country 4-4th and 7-8th linens. Our weavers in the shop would average from 7 *s.* to 10 *s.* each, weekly; those earning 10 *s.* would pay 6 *d.* to us, the others 3 *d.*, per loom rent; they also find their own dressing, winding, &c. Our hours of labour are from half-past five to eight in the evening, two hours being allowed for meals.

COPY of the REGULATIONS adopted in *A. W. Craig & Co's* Factory, Fall's Road, *Belfast.*

BEFORE any weaver will be employed, he must produce a certificate of character, or if he has been in the service of any other manufacturer, show his discharge. He must also give security for the safe return of the yarn, with which he may be intrusted to weave into cloth.

No weaver need apply unless he be a first-rate workman; it will only be a loss of time to inferior tradesmen, as they will not get good wages, nor be employed to weave a second web.

The work must in every case be submitted to the approval of the employers before payment of the wages; and if found defective, a reduction will be made to indemnify them from loss. The reduction in every case to be left to the employers.

Any weaver whose prices have to be reduced a second time will be discharged.

A preference will be given, in every case when fine work is required, to the best weavers.

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The following prices will be paid for the best work, double pieces. (Average 52 yards.)

7-8ths, or 33 inches wide.	£.	s.	d.	4-4ths wide, or 38 inches.	£.	s.	d.
10°°	–	8	6	10°°	–	9	6
11	–	9	6	11	–	10	6
12	–	10	6	12	–	11	6
13	–	11	6	13	–	12	6
14	–	13	–	14	–	14	–
15	–	14	6	15	–	15	6
16	–	16	–	16	–	17	–
17	–	17	6	17	–	18	6
18	–	19	–	18	1	–	–
19	1	–	6	19	1	1	6
20	1	2	–	20	1	3	–
21	1	4	–	21	1	5	–
22	1	6	6	22	1	7	6
23	1	9	–	23	1	10	–
24	1	12	–	24	1	13	–

No odd beers will be paid for; a 14°° and three beers will be paid as a 14°°; other sets in the same way.

There will be a charge of 1 *s.* per week for the use of the loom, reed, hiddles, &c.
Every weaver must supply himself with a shuttle, brushes, bobbins and drier.
The factory will be open from six o'clock in the morning till eight at night.

12th February 1838.

Prices paid for weaving at *Tanderagee.*

	7-8ths: £.	s.	d.	4-4ths. £.	s.	d.		6-4ths and 3 inches wide sheeting. £.	s.	d.
10°°	–	8	–	–	9	–	9°°	–	18	–
11	–	9	–	–	10	–	11	1	–	–
12	–	10	–	–	11	–	12	1	2	–
13	–	11	–	–	12	–	13	1	4	–
14	–	12	6	–	13	6	14	1	6	–
15	–	14	–	–	15	–	15	1	8	–
16	–	15	6	–	16	6				
17	–	17	–	–	18	–				
18	–	18	6	–	19	6				
19	1	–	6	1	2	–				
20	1	2	6	1	4	6				
21	1	5	–	1	7	6				
22	1	8	–	1	11	–				
23	1	13	–	1	16	6				
24	1	18	–	2	2	–				

Reed hire is sometimes charged, say about 6 *d.* to 1 *s.* per web, to be taken off the above prices.

Prices given to country weavers, who occasionally get work, and bring it to the factory when finished. The number does not exceed 20.

	7-8ths. £.	s.	d.	4-4ths. £.	s.	d.
9°°	–	7	–	–	8	–
10	–	7	6	8	6	–
11	–	8	6	–	9	3
12	–	9	6	–	10	–
13	–	10	3	–	10	9
14	–	11	–	–	11	6
15	–	12	–	–	12	6
16	–	13	–	–	13	6
17	–	14	–	–	14	6
18	–	15	6	–	16	–
19	–	17	6	–	18	6
20	1	–	–	1	1	–
21	1	3	–	1	4	–
22	1	6	–	1	7	6
23, 24	not given out.					

No stoppages out of the above, unless for defective work.

Belfast, 21 September 1838. *A. W. Craig & Co.*

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Sackville-street Factory, Belfast,
28 September 1838.

Sir,

In accordance with your request, I have most carefully examined our pay-book, the result of which you have at foot, and on its correctness you may most implicitly depend.

I would esteem it as an obligation, if you would introduce in your report, in whatever way you might think proper, the statement that W. M'Ilwrath & Co. were the first persons who introduced into this country the manufacture of cotton bagging, hemp sacking, and white and brown damask table cloths.

I have, &c.,
(signed) *W. M'Ilwrath.*

Fair average weaver of coarse damask:

Paid him last 13 weeks			£. 5 9 8.
	s.	*d.*	
Being at the rate of	8	$5\frac{3}{3}$	per week.
Of which he will pay for winding weft, say	—	7	
Leaving him, clear of all expenses	7	$10\frac{3}{13}$	per week.

W. M'I.

The result of my extended inquiries, derived from and confirmed alike by the statements of both weavers and employers, has established, that the average weekly earnings of a linen weaver in Ireland, on one loom, would range from 3 *s.* to about 8 *s.* weekly; that is supposing work to be as readily obtainable as it was during the period of my being in Ireland. The higher rates would be those earned by weavers engaged in the production of the finer qualities of linen, which at present are almost exclusively confined to that part of the empire. Where the English and Scotch competition is more directly felt, and especially in those qualities which are also made by the power loom, that is in the medium and coarser qualities, the average weekly earnings of the weaver would probably not exceed from 4 *s.* to 5 *s.* net. In periods of limited demand, technically termed slack times, or in seasons when the yarn bears an undue or disproportionate price to the value of the manufactured article—the cloth, wages are necessarily lower, and frequently depressed to an extent productive of the greatest misery and distress.

Many of the causes producing the low rate of wages for weaving will have presented themselves to your minds in glancing at the statements I have laid before you, and at the observations with which I have accompanied them. The main cause, however, is unquestionably to be traced to the simple fact of the existence of a redundancy of labour. This redundancy manifests itself in a variety of ways, and produces a competition for employment quite as disastrous in its effects on wages, as that competition among the masters, to which the poor weavers innocently, but constantly, attribute the causes and consequences of their inadequately remunerated labour.

No one acquainted with human nature will deny the influence of self interest over all merely mercantile transactions between man and man; or be found to deny that this influence is oftentimes exercised at the sacrifice of those higher and holier feelings which alone can control or keep it under, and which were wisely designed for this beneficent end. It need not be disguised, that masters seeking labour will search out the market where, from any causes, it is to be obtained at the cheapest rate, and among them are too frequently found men, who for their own interest or aggrandizement will make poverty subservient to the still further extension of its attendant evils, by taking advantage of existing distress to get their work done at, what the weavers not inappropriately term, starvation prices. In such more unworthy than unnatural efforts, they would not, however, be successful, but for this redundancy of hands. This is an axiom so obvious, that laboured proof of its truth and force would be, I am sure, as unnecessary, as I believe the fact to be indisputable.

We are brought then to the means by which such a state of things can be remedied or removed, and these may be simply resolved into two propositions.

1. The particular labour market so overstocked must be reduced by a subtraction of a portion of it to other occupations or to other localities; or

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2. The means of employment must be increased to an extent commensurate with the available supply of labour.

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There are two methods by which it was suggested the first object could be attained; namely, a test or qualification which each person should undergo, or possess, before he should be permitted to occupy the calling of a hand-loom weaver, such as the previous service of an indentured apprenticeship, whereby legal obstacles would be thrown in the way of an undue increase of the number of weavers, sufficient to keep them down until these impediments, aided by natural causes, such as death, &c., brought them within the limit of the employment at command. The second, and much dwelt on remedy, was emigration.

Of the impracticability of the first proposed plan, without injustice to other classes, and other interests, I grieve to say I entertain little doubt. Any attempt to prohibit by legislative enactment a person from following an occupation easily acquired, and which he would frequently be enabled to exercise beneficially and profitably to himself and others, would be an assault on the personal liberty of the subject, unlikely to be adopted, even if recommended, in the present age; and the importance of the second, as a mere means of relief to a particular interest, or class of individuals, does not, I confess, appear to me to deserve the importance which many intelligent persons attach to it. Unless at the sacrifice of humanity,* the only description of emigration that could be properly encouraged, from the ranks of the working classes, or which would be beneficial either to the recipient colony, or to the individuals engaged in it, would be that of the most active and enterprising of the labouring community; persons of any other character would impoverish the colony to which they emigrated, without benefiting themselves. It is a fact not to be lost sight of in the consideration of this important subject, that all emigration of persons of a superior order of intelligence or industry, is calculated to deteriorate the quality of the mass from which such valuable elements are abstracted, and besides the tendency of such removals to stimulate the very increase and excess of population which is regarded by the friends of emigration as justifying this mode of relief, we must not loose sight of the possibility of the places of good men being supplied by other less useful members of society.

In a conversation with one of the Government emigration agents, at a principal northern port, on this subject, I learned that the total emigration which had taken place from that port in the five years 1834–8, amounted to 14,233 persons, every one of whom had paid their own expenses, and who were represented by him as "a great loss to Ireland." They were also I found, with very trifling exceptions, all Protestants, and many of them small capitalists, and as he expressed it, "exactly the sort of persons it was most desirable to keep at home." I have little doubt from what I observed and heard, that if emigration were now resorted to as a means of relieving the redundancy of hand-loom labourers, the best weavers would be the first to volunteer to emigrate, as the most sensitive and alive to the conviction of their depressed condition.

In making these observations, I desire that I may not be regarded as contending against emigration under any circumstances. It is perfectly probable that cases may arise in which such a course may be safely recommended and beneficially adopted, as occasionally the health of the most robust man may be best preserved by his losing a portion of that blood which gives him vitality and vigour; what I desire to urge is, that the emigration of any particular class of labourers, in which an apparent or even actual superabund-

ance

* Emigration to America, in preference to our Colonial possessions, I found very generally favoured by the working population. There is too much reason to fear that they are much deceived as to their prospects of good fortune in that highly-lauded country. The Mayor of New York, in a communication to the common council of that city, published in the American Almanack for 1838, states, "Nearly 2,000 emigrants arrive each week, and it is not likely many months will elapse before the number per week will be 3,000. Our streets are filled with the wandering crowds of these passengers, clustering in our city; unaccustomed to our climate, without money, without employment, without friends, many not speaking our language, and without any dependence for food, or raiment, or fire-side. What is to become of them, is a question of serious import. Our whole almshouse department is so full that no more can be received there, without manifest hazard to the health of every inmate. Petitions signed by hundreds, asking for work, are presented in vain. Private associations for relief are almost wholly without funds. Thousands must therefore wander to and fro, filling every part of our once happy land with squalid poverty and profligacy." In the Boston and Philadelphia almshouses, of 4,051 inmates, no less than 1,939 were foreigners.

ance may for a period exist, is not necessarily productive of correspondent relief or advantage to those remaining behind.

On a careful analysis of the causes of the condition of the hand-loom weavers, I believe it will be found, that the prices of the fabrics on which their labour is bestowed, has an equal, if not a greater effect in determining their rates of wages, than the competition of their numbers. I am quite aware that it is commonly assumed, that the extent and supply of employment and available labour alone regulate this important point, that when labourers are scarce and work plenty, a rise in wages is the natural and necessary consequence. This may be ordinarily the case, but innumerable instances could be adduced to show, that in the case of the hand-loom weavers, their wages have been diminishing in an exact or even greater ratio, than their diminution in numbers; and that this result has followed, when exactly contrary ones would have been produced, had numbers only been the influencing regulator of wages.

I am brought to the consideration of my second point, namely,

> "The means by which employment may be increased to an extent commensurate with the available supply of labour."

It has been well and wisely said, "To bring about, by forced and direct interposition, any material increase of permanent employment, is in every view difficult, and under common circumstances perhaps impossible; for mankind will, in the aggregate, spontaneously do that which their interest dictates. Something, however, may be done indirectly in this respect in the way of legislation, by the removal of impediments, and the establishing of increased facilities for the application of capital; and something also, perhaps, by the intervention of Government; but all such evils must of necessity be contracted in their application, as well as remote in their operations; it is from spontaneous or natural employment alone that the labourers of a community can look for permanent occupation and the means of support." *

Entirely coinciding in the opinions herein so ably expressed, I am not prepared to recommend "any forced or direct interposition" with a view to increase the means of employment. If recommended and adopted, I believe such interposition would be inoperative, if not positively injurious, and utterly fail in attaining or approaching the end desired.

I have, however, felt it to be my duty to propose a re-modelling of the laws regulating the linen manufacture of Ireland, which I deem an important step towards "removing impediments, and establishing increased facilities for the application of capital." I believe that, if adopted, the statute I have suggested would place the trade on a far more sound and profitable footing than it now stands; and would facilitate the application of capital, by making it more secure than it can be under the present lax and inadequate protection. How far I am supported in my views and opinions by those most deeply interested in the subject, you will have the opportunity of judging by a perusal of their communications inserted in the Appendix to this Report.

LINEN MANUFACTURE, IRELAND.

Part IV.—Remarks on, and Communications Respecting.

I have endeavoured in the preceding pages to take an accurate, and necessarily, a comprehensive review, of the history of the linen manufacture in Ireland; the laws by which it is regulated and governed; and the condition of the several classes of operatives engaged in it. The opinions I have expressed, and the suggestions I have offered, have been formed and prepared after much anxious attention to the subject, and after much personal communication with the most intelligent practical men, with whom my inquiry brought me into contact or correspondence.

I have written and thought, alike, I trust, under an adequate conviction of the vast

* Mr. Nicholl's First Report on Poor Laws, Ireland, p. 54.

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vast importance of the linen manufacture to Ireland, and a due sense of the magnitude and importance of the interests involved in its prosperity, or declension; with the sincerest desire to avoid any suggestions, or the expression of an opinion, which by possibility could have an injurious or mischievous tendency; at the same time, when I have conscientiously entertained the conviction, that the manufacture could be permanently benefited, either by the breaking up of old systems, however revered, or almost consecrated, by time and custom, or by the adoption of new ones, I have not been deterred from avowing such convictions, even though I may entertain them alone. It is consolatory to me to believe that my views and opinions will be indulgently received and tested by your far higher experience and judgment; and that it is from your Report, and not mine, any legislative alterations, which may be deemed expedient, will hereafter emanate.

You will have gathered from the preceding sections of this report, that I regard the linen manufacture of Ireland as now being in a transition state. It is fast ceasing to be a domestic manufacture, and becoming a national one. The change is natural, and analogous to that which has already passed over the cotton, the silk, the woollen and the hosiery. The history of every manufacture indeed testifies, that its primitive stages are little more than household or domestic occupation. Each of the four great branches of industry I have named, were at first conducted or carried on in the cottage of the artizan. As time developed their respective advantages, and extended demand followed the conviction of their utility, the capitalist was induced to turn his attention to the manufacture; by his aid, the energies of the many were concentrated; improvements, as they arose, were taken advantage of; skill and capital were brought to the aid of industry; and ultimately the mighty energies of mechanical science were brought to bear their powerful sway, in furtherance of the extension, and economy of production.

The triumphant position of the cotton manufacture, through the instrumentality of the latter great auxiliary, and the gigantic strides which this branch of the national industry has made within the last half century, by the combination of increased quantity with economy in the cost of production, has exercised considerable influence upon the manufacture of linen; and probably hastened the transition of which I am writing. Fabrics so little dissimilar in their nature and their uses, and capable of being so frequently substituted one for the other, must necessarily partake of something like rivalry; but when the cost of the one is reduced to less than one fourth of the other, unless the relative advantages or disadvantages of either be in an equal proportion, it needs no philosopher to foretell which would ultimately gain the preference.

This conviction, silently but extensively operating, is inducing the principal, and most intelligent members of the linen trade, to make great efforts to attain cheaper production; and to their success, limited as it at present has been, may be mainly ascribed the comparative briskness which has characterized the trade for the last 18 months. Among the most important of the means to this end already developed, has been the erection of several extensive establishments, both in Britain and in Ireland, for the spinning of flax into yarn by machinery. The success which has hitherto marked their progress, to some extent evinces, and testifies their utility; but, it is much to be regretted, that improvements, obviously so desirable, should have brought in their train so much of individual suffering and distress, as they have unquestionably occasioned. Prior to the establishment of the power-loom spinning factories, the spinning of yarn, by hand, was the ordinary occupation of the females of almost every family in the province of Ulster, connected with the linen weaving. It was a constant source, not only of employment, but of fair, and sometimes even liberal profit; and of a nature eminently adapted to the social and physical capacities of those who followed it. The past and present condition of the hand spinner cannot be more forcibly pourtrayed than in the words of some of my witnesses, accustomed to the occupation.

John Duff, of Aughenleague, near Armagh, says: "Great loss has been sustained by the families of weavers being thrown idle by the substitution of the mill-spun yarn for the hand-spun. Formerly a hand-spinner would get 4*d.* to

to 4 ½ *d.* a hank; now 1 ½ *d.* would be the outside, even if they could get the yarn to spin, which they frequently cannot."

Edward M'Veagh, of Coleraine, says: "The great distress of our families has been occasioned by the use of mill-spun yarn, and doing away with the hand-spun in a great measure."

Daniel M'Intire states: "There is a public yarn-market every Saturday morning in Coleraine, where weavers may purchase yarn for warp and weft; this is all hand-spun yarn. There are also warehouses or shops, where mill-spun yarn is to be bought. Some use both; some mill-spun warp, and hand-spun or market weft. Hand-spun yarn cannot be got now in sufficient quantities to supply all the weavers. The flax is bought up very much, particularly the best qualities, by the spinning-mill establishments. Nor are there the same inducements as formerly to spin the yarn at home in their houses; hand-spinning prices are so low, that it is not followed at all hardly. A pound of flax will come to a shilling; you would not get more than five hanks out of that, and that quantity could not be spun under a week by hand. The pound of flax, to spin which costs 1*s.*, would not be worth more than 1*s.* 8*d.*; this would give but 8*d.* for the spinning, which will show that it is not likely there will be much hand-spun yarn; it is so poor a remuneration for industry; the price is from 3 ½ *d.* to 4 ½ *d.* a hank for coarse; the average price, therefore, is 4*d.* There are four hanks to the spangle. I remember the time when I have myself paid 5*s.* for the spangle, which is now but averaging 10 *d.* There was some encouragement to spinning then; this was about 1812 or 1814, during the war, when extraordinary prices were going on. These alterations have greatly depressed the condition of the weaver's family; poverty was then kept from our doors, but it has greatly crept on us since."

Mr. *David Longmore*, deputy sealmaster at Derry, says: "The number of webs brought to Derry market have greatly decreased within the last few years; not one-third as many webs come now as did in 1830. I think the decline is attributable to the low prices of the linen. Men cannot live for what they get for weaving now. There is a great difference in respect of the appearance of the weavers who come to market now and formerly; they are not so well dressed, nor near so comfortable-looking: the men are also older-looking; the fine sturdy young men, who once came to market, have now gone out of the trade, and many have emigrated to America. I remember when it was the best occupation in Ireland; now it is gone to nothing. The cotton trade has ruined the linen; formerly everybody wore linen, and now everybody wears cotton.

"I have known a time when a woman was paid 18*d.* a spangle for spinning yarn; now the best price is only 8*d.* a spangle. A hank is considered a fair day's spinning; there are four hanks to the spangle, and 12 cuts to each hank; a full woman (adult) would do but the hank in the day; that would give her 2*d.*; girls, from 12 years of age and upwards, would do from six cuts to eight or ten cuts per day, according to their age; a hank is always regarded a fair day's work. There were formerly four times as many weavers, within ten miles of Derry, as there are now. In the little town of Gortgraatuagh, three miles from this, there were 32 looms about 20 years ago, and at this moment there are but two. Every farmer there had a journeyman, and several of them apprentices, weaving; now there is not a farmer in the town who has a weaver about him."

Alexander M'Cormick, of Coleraine, says: "I have known a good hand-spinner make as much as 5*s.* a week; now the best could not make more than from 10*d.* to 1*s.* by a hard week's spinning."

The distress occasioned by hand-spinning having ceased to be a remunerative employment, is almost universally felt and complained of in the North and West of Ireland; and it is much to be regretted that, excepting the small portion of the females hitherto so occupied, who have had the opportunity of resorting to the weaving of inferior mixed fabrics called 'unions,' or of coarse linens, no other manufacturing occupation has presented itself. In some instances I found, indeed, they had been driven to field labour, fit only for the other sex, with whom they had become, to a certain extent, competitors; but in a great majority of cases they were without profitable employment, if I except the getting-in

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getting-in of the harvest, which, I observed, in the counties of Antrim, Down, and Derry, to be almost exclusively performed by females.

The system of migration of adult male labourers, which takes place annually from Ireland to this country, and to Scotland, immediately preceding the harvest, may in some measure account for this latter circumstance. It is satisfactory to find, that the earnings of the poor persons who so migrate are not usually expended in drinking, or other extravagancies, but are carefully husbanded and carried home, and frequently serve to pay their rents, and enable them to subsist comfortably until the potato crop furnishes them the means of the winter's support. During this season of the year, work of any sort, or labour for wages, is very rarely to be obtained; but apart from the difficulty of obtaining it, the monotony of continuous labour is that against which the volatile spirit of the Irish character seems most to rebel; and frequently to avoid the necessity of seeking, or submitting to this, it is that such unjust exactions, in the shape of rentals for small patches of land, are not only unhesitatingly, but cheerfully submitted to. Once the cottier ascends the first step of the ladder, and becomes a holder, he has attained, if not the *ne plus ultra*, certainly the object of ambition nearest his heart; he then considers himself established; he fancies he has business at markets, and at fairs; he must needs keep a horse and a car; and withal he has always something to do; but it is just when he likes, and just as much as he likes.

It was once endeavoured to be explained to me, that the comparative lowness of condition of the Irish peasantry arose from a fact that might not have been brought before me, namely, that "an Irishman's year has but 200 days!" I confessed that the proposition was novel to me, and my informant, with perfect gravity, thus logically, and, as he considered, unanswerably, demonstrated it: "You will allow," said he, "an Irishman has 52 Sabbaths, in which he should not work?"—Granted. "There then is 52 days. Not an Irishman in the county Armagh that does'nt attend at least one market weekly; there go 52 more days. Find an Irishman, if you can, that does not attend one fair a month; there go 12 more days. Where's the man, if he be at all respectable, that won't devote his afternoon or half-day to the wake or funeral of his friend or neighbour; and it's a poor neighbourhood that there won't be one death in a week; there go 26 days more. Then you know there are our saint-days, and our holy-days, and our birth-days; and may be Dan will be getting up a precurshur, or a tithe maiting, or the likes o' that, which a man is bound to attend, for the love of ould Ireland; and now make your reckoning, and see whether a man will have more than 200 days in a year he can call his own."

There is, I fear, too much of fact in this exquisitely simple and unsophisticated narrative, and much time is lost in the market, and the fair, and elsewhere, which, applied to industrial pursuits or objects, would go far to ameliorate the condition of the people. Much of this inertness, or idleness, may unquestionably be ascribed to the low and inadequate rate of wages in Ireland; and to labour mostly being remunerated by a standard too low to call forth those incentives to industry and good workmanship, which are induced by a liberal, or even a fair scale of payment. Hence it is, though paradoxical it may seem, that "cheap labour is dear labour;" the lack of motive to work will impair the value and efficiency of the labour rendered; and the slovenly and careless manner in which, under such circumstances, work is performed, too often makes it almost valueless to the employer, and, as a natural consequence, rarely to be repeated.

So far from there being any absence of the constituent elements of employment in Ireland, I have never witnessed, though somewhat of an extensive traveller, a country so abundantly supplied with the means of labour and occupation. With a rich and varied soil, whose powers of production have not been called into fruition, or even half-activity; large tracts of land lying waste for want of cultivation; rivers and bays teeming with fish, comparatively undisturbed and unsought after; public roads, much frequented, yet suffered to remain in so bad a state as to diminish the means of transit of goods and merchandize, and greatly to add to the cost of it: we witness the painful anomaly of a population half famishing for lack of employment. In some degree, no doubt, this peculiar state of things may be attributed to the non-existence, hitherto, of any legal provision for the destitute; and the want of that salutary re-active tendency of Poor Laws, to create and perpetuate employment, as a means

means of averting the consequences necessarily flowing from its absence. It ought not, however, to be concealed, that other causes, remediable and avoidable, have exercised far greater influence in producing these disastrous results. Political and religious animosities and dissentions, and unceasing agitation, first for one object and then for another, have so destroyed confidence, and shaken the bonds of society,—undermined men's principles, and estranged neighbour from neighbour, friend from friend, and class from class,—that, in lieu of observing any common effort to ameliorate the condition of the people, we find every proposition for this object, emanate from which party it may, received with distrust by the other; maligned, perverted, and destroyed, to gratify the political purposes of a faction.

On this subject, the complaints of every man engaged in trade with whom I conversed were loud and uniform. Commerce was compared, by one of them, in timidity, to the dove; it will venture only where assured of security and tranquillity, and not light on shores disturbed by political or social convulsion. I could enumerate a long catalogue of instances in which capital has been actually driven from the country, by the insecurity arising from agrarian and political disturbances; but the far greater number of cases in which these causes have deterred its approach, would, if detailed, convincingly account for many of the evils, happily almost peculiar to this ill-fated land.

The comparative prosperity enjoyed by that portion of Ireland where tranquillity ordinarily prevails, such as the counties Down, Antrim, and Derry, testify the capabilities of Ireland to work out her own regeneration, when freed of the disturbing causes which have so long impeded her progress in civilization and improvement. We find there a population hardy, healthy, and employed; capital fast flowing into the district; new sources of employment daily developing themselves; a people well disposed alike to the Government and institutions of their country; and not distrustful and jealous of their superiors. Contrast the social condition of these people with such pictures as we have presented to us from other districts. Mr. John William Haynes, the conductor of the Barrington Mont de Piété in Limerick, states:*

"There is a description of persons who live entirely on their dealings in huxtering eggs, potatoes, and other things of that sort, of a very poor description. They deal almost entirely with us. They pledge in the morning their bed-clothes for as much money as will buy six or eight stone of potatoes. They hold them up until evening, and then dispose of them at a higher rate to those persons who are not able to come in the morning early to buy from the farmers. They pledge their bed-clothes with us for 3*s.* 11*d.*; they are going as close as they can upon the 4*s.*†; for which they only pay us in the evening a half-penny. They invariably release the articles in the evening, and support their families upon the profit of what they have borrowed in the day."

There is probably no country in the world in which the pawning and borrowing of small sums is carried on to as great an extent as in Ireland, or on such disadvantageous terms. For loans of two, three, or four pounds, advanced in the months of May or June, notes of hand will frequently be passed, made payable after harvest, in which the interest is made to amount to half the sum borrowed‡; where such a ruinous course is attempted to be avoided, and persons get potatoes or other articles on credit, they seem only to escape Scylla to fall on Charybdis. A witness examined before the same Parliamentary Committee states:

"In the case of persons buying potatoes, it is the common habit of farmers to charge them perhaps 8*s.* a barrel more than the market price, for giving the person time."

He is asked, "What time is usual?" and answers, "Generally from the summer season, when the potatoes become scarce, till harvest, when the potatoes are dug."

Question.—"Not extending to six months?—Nothing like it."

"Where 8*s.* more than the market price is charged for a barrel, what would you suppose to be the average price of a barrel at that time?—I suppose a guinea or 22*s.*"

"So

* Minutes of Evidence, p. 15, Parliamentary Paper, 677.

† Beyond which sum the interest would be higher.

‡ Sessional Paper, 677; question 254.

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"So that 8*s.* interest would in fact be charged upon a guinea principal for six months?—Yes."

The establishment of benevolent loan fund societies in several districts is doing much to alleviate the crying evil of these exorbitant charges for the loan of small sums of money, and are well worthy of more extensive and general adoption. In Dublin, the governors of the Charitable Musical Society, incorporated by Act of Parliament in 1780 for lending money, interest free, in sums of not less than 2*l.*, nor more than 5*l.*, to be repaid at 6*d.* in the pound weekly, advanced 258*l.* between the 1st November 1837 and the 1st November 1838, to 79 borrowers, whose families numbered 351 persons; and since their establishment, have assisted 5,515 borrowers, with families amounting to 25,826 persons, in loans of 20,740*l.* The system of pawnbroking in Ireland is also loudly calling for Legislative revision and amendment; and, as at present constructed, is a source of great hardship and extortion on the indigent. In order that I might in some degree be enabled to judge how far the impressions left on my mind by my personal investigations were in unison with the views and opinions of some of the principal members of the linen trade, I prepared, subsequently to my return from Ireland, a list of questions, which I transmitted to about 30 manufacturers, and gentlemen formerly extensively engaged in it.

I subjoin,

1st. A copy of the questions I transmitted, and

2d. The replies which have reached me, in the order of their dates.

(*Vide Appendix, page* 746.)

These communications, important, and replete with sound practical information as most of them are, will, I trust, with the lengthened report which I have felt it my duty to address to you, enable you to form an accurate opinion of the present state of the linen manufacture of Ireland, and of the condition of the persons engaged in it. Should I however have inadvertently omitted any point, upon which you are desirous of further information, I shall, if within my power, very cheerfully supply the omission.

The Select Committee of the House of Commons, appointed in 1825, to consider the laws which regulated the linen trade of Ireland, among other things reported, that many of the then existing laws, which were deemed wise and necessary at the time of their enactment, had become inapplicable to the usages of the trade; and from an unwillingness to force any hasty changes upon the settled habits of a people long engaged in an established manufacture, they justified the policy of continuing to give a legal sanction to some parts of the system of regulation by which it was governed. They added:—

"The system of conducting the linen manufacture in England and Scotland, appears to be, in many instances, preferable to that which is pursued in Ireland. The different branches of the trade in Great Britain are divided among different persons, each of those branches becoming a separate business in itself; and this division of labour necessarily leads to a better economy of time, and the production of more even and better fabrics, all which advantages might be gradually introduced into Ireland; and it is only by gradual measures these improvements can be obtained.

* * * * *

"With respect to the business of weaving, Your Committee are of opinion that it is now carried on more beneficially in England and Scotland for the weaver than in Ireland, who is generally the owner of the cloth he makes, mostly performing all those previous processes in his own imperfect way, each of which would be better executed if made a separate business in itself, and carried on with better means and more intelligence than the weaver is found to possess."

"Your Committee do not, however, recommend the weaving business in Ireland to be assimilated to the better system of Great Britain by any interference of the Legislature, which never should concern itself, except when it was absolutely necessary, with the internal management of any manufacture. This system has already begun in the North, and it is chiefly through that intelligent portion of the country, that we can hope to establish any great improvement of this kind.

* * * * *

There

"There are extensive manufacturers who buy and give out the yarn to weavers to be woven into cloth, and have become a numerous class of persons in the North, and the more they increase the more it will be for the benefit of Ireland. The weaver, who works for another, must save all that time which he now consumes in going to, and returning from, market; and all those fluctuations in the price of linen, which now fall upon himself, would in that case fall upon the person who employed him. Thus the situation of the working weavers would be improved, without necessitating any change in their numbers, or in their dispersed residences throughout the country parts of Ireland, or any alteraton in their local comforts in any way whatsoever."

The Committee concluded their Report by stating it as their opinion, that so long as the manufacture was affected by legal provisions, the continuation of some superintending authority would be necessary.

The same Committee reported, that, in the spinning, by machinery, of linen yarn, 20 years ago, the average leas per pound would not exceed 15. I subjoin an interesting communication from Messrs. Marshall, of Leeds, showing the vast progressive improvement which is taking place.

Sir, Leeds, 19 March 1839.

As the best means within our reach of answering your inquiry respecting the progress of improvements in mill-spun linen yarn since the year 1825, we annex a table, showing the average fineness of the whole of the yarn spun in our establishment here for each year since that period; also the proportion per cent. of 50 to 100 leas (or cuts), and of 100 leas and finer, for each year.

The common limit of fineness of linen yarn, spun by machinery, may be now considered to be about 150 leas; and all used for different descriptions of common linens, and not sufficiently fine for the manufacture of cambrics, or thread for lace.

We now spin a small proportion of yarn of 150 to 240 leas (included in the following table) used in the manufacture of lawns and coarse cambrics, in the neighbourhood of Belfast; the quantity is trifling, and we believe there is scarce any yarn spun so fine by other spinners.

Improvements continue to take place in the various departments of flax spinning, for the most part gradually, but with every prospect of continuance; leading to the anticipation, that in the course of a moderate term of years all degrees of fineness of linen yarn, now spun by hand, up to 300 and 400 leas, may be spun by machinery.

We are, &c.
Marshall & Co.

YEARS.	Average Leas per lb. of Total Yarn Spun.	Per Centage Spun on Total Spun.	
		50 Leas per lb., to 90 inclusive.	100 Leas per lb., and Finer.
1825 - - - -	17.8	.7	—
1826 - - - -	16.2	—	—
1827 - - - -	19.7	1.9	—
1828 - - - -	20.	7.2	.7
1829 - - - -	22.2	10.3	2.
1830 - - - -	23.4	19.2	5.3
1831 - - - -	27.6	21.8	5.9
1832 - - - -	31.5	33.	6.5
1833 - - - -	36.9	36.1	11.8
1834 - - - -	39.1	33.2	16.2
1835 - - - -	37.8	30.2	14.6
1836 - - - -	37.3	29.	16.7
1837 - - - -	39.6	33.1	15.2
1838 - - - -	42.3	37.	21.

I have not, as you will perceive, adverted to the religious, moral, or educational condition of any portion of the people of Ireland. In adopting this course, I have not, I assure you, been influenced by any fear of the consequences of expressing honestly-entertained opinions on a subject of paramount importance, on which many of the best and wisest men differ in views and judgment, but solely from a conviction that my means and opportunities of inquiry and investigation were too limited to afford me the chance of doing anything like justice, either to the subject, to you, or to myself. I have therefore deemed it the most prudent course to refrain from expressing hastily-drawn conclusions or impressions, which, if expressed, might possibly mislead, and, if acted upon, be productive of evil rather than good.

Such an investigation would require, and deserve, the undivided energies of the most enlightened minds; and could, in my judgment, only be conducted advantageously, apart from the consideration of all matters of minor import.

I have the honour to be, Gentlemen,
Your faithful servant,
Richard M. Muggeridge,
Assistant Commissioner.

P. S.—I transmit herewith the whole of the Evidence taken by me in Ireland.

APPENDIX.

[In the "Proposed Act," the words printed in *Italics* only are new.]

Proposed and Present Act.

Proposed Act.

Whereas an Act was passed in the 5th and 6th years of the reign of his late Majesty, intituled, "An Act to continue and amend certain regulations for the Linen and Hempen Manufactures in Ireland," to continue and be in force for a time therein limited and expressed; and whereas by another Act passed in the 1st and 2d years of the reign of Her present Majesty, intituled, "An Act to continue for Five Years, and from thence until the end of the then next session of Parliament, an Act of the 5th and 6th years of his late Majesty for the Linen and Hempen Manufactures in Ireland," it was enacted, that such aforesaid Act of the 5th & 6th years of the reign of his late Majesty should be further continued for a period expressed in the said last recited Act: and whereas it is expedient to repeal the said statutes, and to substitute other provisions in lieu thereof; Be it therefore enacted, by the Queen's most excellent Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Lords spiritual and temporal, and Commons, in this present Parliament assembled, and by the authority of the same, that from and after the commencement of this Act, all flax sold by sample or otherwise, or exposed for sale in open fair or market, in Ireland, shall be of equal cleanness and quality throughout each parcel, upon pain that any person selling or exposing for sale such flax, or the owner thereof at the time of sale, shall forfeit and pay a sum not exceeding the amount of 1 *s.* for every stone of flax so sold or exposed for sale which shall not be of equal cleanness and quality throughout each parcel.

Present Act.

An Act to continue and amend certain Regulations for the Linen and Hempen Manufactures in Ireland.

[21 August 1835.]

Whereas several Acts from time to time have passed, containing regulations for the linen and hempen manufactures in Ireland, and such regulations were, by an Act passed in the second and third years of the reign of His present Majesty, intituled "An Act for the better Regulation of the Linen and Hempen Manufactures in Ireland," continued in force until the end of the present session of Parliament, when the same will expire; and it is expedient that such regulations should be, with certain modifications, continued for a time to be limited: Be it therefore enacted, by the King's most excellent Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Lords spiritual and temporal, and Commons, in this present Parliament assembled, and by the authority of the same, that from and after the commencement of this Act all flax sold by sample or otherwise, or exposed for sale in open fair or market, in Ireland, shall be of equal cleanness and quality throughout each parcel, upon pain that any person selling or exposing for sale such flax, or the owner thereof at the time of sale, shall forfeit and pay a sum not exceeding the amount of 1 *s.* for every stone of flax so sold or exposed for sale which shall not be of equal cleanness and quality throughout each parcel.

Regulations as to reeling and counting linen yarn when sold in fair or market.

2. And be it further enacted, that all brown or unbleached, or unpurged linen yarn sold in open fair or market in Ireland, shall be well and sufficiently spun and made up into hanks, each hank to consist of 12 cuts and no more, save and except in the case of yarn or grist of two hanks in the pound, commonly called pound yarn or head yarn, which last-mentioned description of yarn shall be made up in half hanks of six cuts, and no less; and every such cut shall contain 120 threads, and no more; and every such hank shall be one yard and one quarter in length, or two yards and one-half in circumference, and no more; and each such cut in every such hank shall be separated as the same shall be reeled, and not afterwards; and in reeling such linen yarn no more than one thread at a time shall be reeled; and all the yarn contained in every such hank shall be of flax yarn only, or tow yarn only, of the same colour and fineness throughout each hank; and when the hank or 12 cuts are reeled, the same shall be made up in such manner as to admit of opening thereof

2. And be it further enacted, that all brown or unbleached, or unpurged linen yarn sold in open fair or market in Ireland, shall be well and sufficiently spun and made up into hanks, each hank to consist of 12 cuts and no more, save and except in the case of yarn or grist of two hanks in the pound, commonly called pound yarn or head yarn, which last-mentioned description of yarn shall be made up in half hanks of six cuts, and no less; and every such cut shall contain 120 threads, and no more; and every such hank shall be one yard and one quarter in length, or two yards and one half in circumference, and no more; and each such cut in every such hank shall be separated as the same shall be reeled, and not afterwards; and in reeling such linen yarn no more than one thread at a time shall be reeled; and all the yarn contained in every such hank shall be of flax yarn only, or tow yarn only, of the same colour and fineness throughout each hank; and when the hank or 12 cuts are reeled, the same shall be made up in such manner as to admit of opening thereof

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thereof at every part at 10 inches at least, for the purpose of spreading on the bleach green; and in case any person or persons shall sell or expose for sale in open fair or market any yarn which shall not be conformable to the above regulations, or which shall be deficient in quality, length, or count, such person or persons, or the owner or owners of such yarn at the time of sale, shall forfeit a sum after the rate of not less than 1*d.*, nor more than 4*d.*, for every hank of such yarn so sold or exposed for sale as aforesaid; and that in all cases of fraud or wilful default in the preparation of linen yarn which shall be sold or exposed for sale in open fair or market, the person or persons selling or exposing for sale such yarn, or the owner or owners thereof, shall forfeit a sum not less than 1*d.*, nor more than 4*d.*, for every hank of such yarn so sold as aforesaid: provided always, that nothing hereinbefore contained shall extend or be construed to extend to mill-spun yarn, and that no mill-spun yarn shall be subject to the regulations aforesaid.

Places and hours of sale of linen yarn and flax.

3. And be it further enacted, that for the purposes of this Act all flax or linen yarn which shall be sold or exposed for sale in the public or usual market-place of any fair or market, between the hours of eight of the clock in the forenoon and two of the clock in the afternoon of any fair or market-day, shall be deemed and taken to be sold or offered for sale in open fair or market, and none other; any law, usage, or custom to the contrary notwithstanding.

4. *And whereas great inconvenience has arisen in some markets in which linens of different denominations are sold, by reason of the market for such several denominations of linens being held at the same time, whereby buyers have been precluded from making purchases, by reason of their inability to attend at one time the several places of sale of such separate denominations of linens; Be it therefore enacted, that in all markets in which more than one denomination of linens are customarily offered for sale, it shall be lawful for the chief magistrate, or any two justices residing in or nearest to the place in which such market is held, to fix the hours at which the market for each of such several denominations of linens shall commence: Provided always, that such hours shall be between eight of the clock in the forenoon and one of the clock in the afternoon; and any person selling, or offering for sale, in public market, any denominations of linen before the time so appointed for the commencement of the market for sale of such linens by such chief magistrate or justices aforesaid, shall forfeit* 5s. *for every piece of linen so sold or offered for sale, to the use of the inspector or informer obtaining the conviction.*

Weaver to weave two coarse threads, and write his name and residence on every piece of linen, with its length and breadth.

5. And be it further enacted, that across each end of every piece of linen cloth sold or exposed for sale in open fair or market in Ireland, there shall be woven two coarse threads or cords, distant from each other about one fourth part of an inch; and there shall be written with pen and ink, close to such coarse threads or cords on each end, in legible characters, the Christian name, surname,

Present Act.

thereof at every part at ten inches at least, for the purpose of spreading on the bleach green; and in case any person or persons shall sell or expose for sale in open fair or market any yarn which shall not be conformable to the above regulations, or which shall be deficient in quality, length, or count, such person or persons, or the owner or owners of such yarn at the time of sale, shall forfeit a sum after the rate of not less than 1*d.*, nor more than 4*d.*, for every hank of such yarn so sold or exposed for sale as aforesaid; and that in all cases of fraud or wilful default in the preparation of linen yarn which shall be sold or exposed for sale in open fair or market, the person or persons selling or exposing for sale such yarn, or the owner or owners thereof, shall forfeit a sum not less than 1*d.*, nor more than 4*d.*, for every hank of such yarn so sold as aforesaid: provided always, that nothing hereinbefore contained shall extend or be construed to extend to mill-spun yarn, and that no mill-spun yarn shall be subject to the regulations aforesaid.

3. And be it further enacted, that for the purposes of this Act all flax or linen yarn which shall be sold or exposed for sale in the public or usual market-place of any fair or market, between the hours of eight of the clock in the forenoon and two of the clock in the afternoon of any fair or market-day, shall be deemed and taken to be sold or offered for sale in open fair or market, and none other; any law, usage, or custom to the contrary notwithstanding.

4. And be it further enacted, that across each end of every piece of linen cloth sold or exposed for sale in open fair or market in Ireland, there shall be woven two coarse threads or cords, distant from each other about one fourth part of an inch; and there shall be written with pen and ink, close to such coarse threads or cords on each end, in legible characters, the Christian name, surname, and place of residence of the weaver or manufacturer thereof; and there shall be also written or marked upon the outside fold of every such piece of linen the length and breadth thereof; and in case any person shall sell, or offer for sale, in open fair or market, any piece of linen wherein such threads or cords shall not be so woven, or whereon the name and residence of the weaver or manufacturer, and the length and breadth thereof, shall not be so written, such person so offending shall, upon complaint and proof thereof, forfeit a sum not exceeding 5*s.* for every such offence, according to the judgment and discretion of the justice or chief magistrate before whom any such complaint shall be made.

5. And be it further enacted, that no person shall sell, or expose for sale, in open fair or market in Ireland, any piece of brown linen cloth being of or exceeding the set of 1,200, made or intended to be of the denomination commonly called yard wide, that shall not be, when brown and before the same shall be bleached, 37½ inches broad at least; and that all cloth of the denomination

Proposed Act.

name, and place of residence of the weaver or manufacturer thereof; and there shall be also written or marked upon the outside fold of every such piece of linen the length and breadth thereof; and in case any person shall sell, or offer for sale, in open fair or market, any piece of linen wherein such threads or cords shall not be so woven, or whereon the name and residence of the weaver or manufacturer, and the length and breadth thereof, shall not be so written, such person so offending shall, upon complaint and proof thereof, forfeit a sum not exceeding 5*s.* for every such offence, according to the judgment and discretion of the justice or chief magistrate before whom any such complaint shall be made.

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nation of yard wide, being under the set of 1,200, shall be, when brown, 36 inches broad at least; and that no person shall sell or expose for sale in any public market any piece of plain linen cloth, being of the denomination commonly called 7-8ths wide, that shall not be, when brown and before the same shall be bleached, 32 inches broad at least, and that no person shall sell or expose for sale in any public market any piece of plain linen cloth, being of the denomination commonly called three-quarters wide, that shall not be, when brown and before the same shall be bleached, 28 inches broad at least; and that no person shall sell or expose for sale in any public market any piece of plain linen cloth of the denomination of 9-8ths wide sheeting, that shall not be, when brown and before the same shall be bleached, 41 inches broad at least; and that no person shall sell or expose for sale in any public fair or market any piece of plain linen cloth of the denomination of five-quarters wide sheeting, that shall not be, when brown and before the same shall be bleached, 45 inches broad at least; and that no person shall sell or expose for sale in any public fair or market any piece of plain linen cloth of the denomination of six-quarters wide sheeting, that shall not be, when brown and before the same shall be bleached, 54 inches broad at least; and that if any person shall sell or expose for sale in any fair or market any linen cloth or sheetings of the denominations above mentioned, which shall not be respectively of the widths above directed and specified, every such person shall be subject to a penalty of not less than 5*s.* nor more than 10*s.* for each such piece so sold in open fair or market.

Penalty for neglect.

6. And be it further enacted, that no person shall sell or expose for sale in open fair or market in Ireland, any piece of brown linen cloth being of or exceeding the set of 1,200, made or intended to be of the denomination commonly called yard wide, that shall not be, when brown and before the same shall be bleached, 37½ inches broad at least; and that all cloth of the denomination of yard wide, being under the set of 1,200, shall be, when brown, 36 inches broad at least; and that no person shall sell or expose for sale in any public market, any piece of plain linen cloth being of the denomination commonly called 7-8ths wide, that shall not be, when brown and before the same shall be bleached, 32 inches broad at least; and that no person shall sell or expose for sale in any public market any piece of plain linen cloth being of the denomination commonly called three-quarters wide, that shall not be, when brown and before the same shall be bleached, 28 inches broad at least; and that no person shall sell or expose for sale in any public market any piece of plain linen cloth of the denomination of 9-8ths wide, sheeting, that shall not be, when brown and before the same shall be bleached, 41 inches broad at least; and that no person shall sell or expose for sale in any public fair or market, any piece of plain linen cloth of the denomination of five-quarters wide sheeting, that shall not be, when brown and before the same shall be bleached, 45 inches broad at least; and that no person shall sell or expose for sale in any public fair or market, any piece of plain linen cloth of the denomination of six-quarters wide sheeting, that shall not be, when brown and before the same shall be bleached, 54 inches broad at least; and that if any person shall sell or expose for sale in any fair or market any linen cloth or sheeting of the denominations above-mentioned, which shall not be respectively of the widths above directed and specified, every such person shall be subject to a penalty of not less than 5*s.* nor more than 10*s.* for each such piece so sold in open fair or market.

6. And be it further enacted, that every piece of brown or unbleached linen cloth which shall be so exposed to sale in open fair or market shall be so exposed in open folds, and no ways tied at either end or in the middle, upon pain that any person selling or exposing for sale any such linen cloth contraryto the directions aforesaid, shall forfeit not less than 2*s.* 6*d.* nor more than 5*s.* for every such piece so sold or exposed for sale as aforesaid.

Widths of linen cloth.

Yard wide.

7-8ths wide.

3-4ths wide.

9-8ths wide.

5 qrs. wide.

6 qrs. wide.

Penalty.

7. And be it further enacted, that every piece of brown or unbleached linen cloth which shall be exposed to sale in open fair or market, shall be so exposed in open folds, and no ways tied at either end or in the middle, upon pain that any person selling or exposing for sale any such linen cloth contrary to the directions aforesaid, shall forfeit not less than 2*s.* 6*d.*, nor more than 5*s.*, for

7. And be it further enacted, that no person shall in open fair or market sell or expose for sale any piece of brown or unbleached plain linen cloth which shall be thicker or finer in the selvage than in the body of such piece, or which shall not be of equal fineness and thickness throughout every part of the length and breadth of such piece, under a penalty of a sum not less than 2*s.* 6*d.* nor

How linen cloth shall be exposed to sale in fair or market.

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for every such piece so sold or exposed for sale as aforesaid.

Linen to be of equal fineness throughout.

8. And be it further enacted, that no person shall in open fair or market sell or expose for sale any piece of brown or unbleached plain linen cloth which shall be thicker or finer in the selvage than in the body of such piece, or which shall not be of equal fineness and thickness throughout every part of the length and breadth of such piece, under a penalty of a sum not less than 2 *s.* 6 *d.* nor more than 20 *s.* for every such piece of linen so sold or exposed for sale as aforesaid.

Linen not to be pasted or spouted.

9. And be it further enacted, that no person shall sell or expose for sale in open fair or market any piece of brown or unbleached linen, any part whereof shall have been glazed, pasted, or spouted, after it is woven, or dyed or stained, either in the yarn or cloth, with any material which has a tendency to render the part so glazed, pasted, spouted, dyed or stained more difficult to bleach, or to deceive the buyer as to quality, on pain of forfeiting not less than 5 *s.*, nor more than 20 *s.* for every such piece so sold as aforesaid.

What shall be deemed a sale or exposure for sale of linen in fair or market.

10. And be it further enacted, that for the purposes of this Act, all linen which shall be sold or exposed for sale within the custom gaps or custom gates of any fair or market, on the respective fair or market days, between the hours hereinafter mentioned, (that is to say,) between ten of the clock in the forenoon and two of the clock in the afternoon from the 25th day of March until the 25th day of September in each year, and between 11 of the clock in the forenoon and two of the clock in the afternoon from the 25th day of September until the 25th day of March in each year, shall be deemed and taken to be sold or exposed for sale in open fair or market, and none other; any law, usage or custom to the contrary notwithstanding.

Proceedings before justice or chief magistrate upon complaints on oath.

11. And be it further enacted, that it shall and may be lawful for any justice of the peace, or the chief magistrate of any town, before whom a complaint on oath shall be made against any person or persons for selling or offering for sale in fair or market, any flax,

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nor more than 20 *s.* for every such piece of linen so sold or exposed for sale as aforesaid.

8. And be it further enacted, that no person shall sell or expose for sale in open fair or market any piece of brown or unbleached linen any part whereof shall have been glazed, pasted or spouted, after it is woven, or dyed or stained, either in the yarn or cloth, with any material which has a tendency to render the part so glazed, pasted, spouted, dyed or stained more difficult to bleach, or to deceive the buyer as to quality, on pain of forfeiting not less than 5 *s.* nor more than 20 *s.* for every such piece so sold as aforesaid.

9. And be it further enacted, that for the purposes of this Act, all linen which shall be sold or exposed for sale within the custom gaps or custom gates of any fair or market, on the respective fair or market days, between the hours hereinafter mentioned, (that is to say,) between ten of the clock in the forenoon and two of the clock in the afternoon from the 25th day of March until the 25th day of September in each year, and between 11 of the clock in the forenoon and two of the clock in the afternoon from the 25th day of September until the 25th day of March in each year, shall be deemed and taken to be sold or exposed for sale in open fair or market, and none other; any law, usage or custom to the contrary notwithstanding.

10. And be it further enacted, that it shall and may be lawful for any justice of the peace, or the chief magistrate of any town, before whom a complaint on oath shall be made against any person or persons for selling or offering for sale in fair or market any flax, yarn or linen not conformable to the regulations in this Act contained, or for any fraud or wilful default in the preparation or manufacture of such flax, yarn or linen so sold or offered for sale, and such justice or chief magistrate is hereby required and empowered, to summon before him three persons skilled in flax, yarn or linen, as the case may be, of whom one shall be named by the party making such complaint, another by the party against whom such complaint may be made, and the third by such justice or chief magistrate; and in default of either party making such nomination, such justice or chief magistrate shall nominate a person on behalf of the party so making default; and the three persons so summoned shall be sworn by such justice or chief magistrate well and truly to examine the flax, yarn or linen, as the case may be, which is the subject of such complaint, and a true verdict to give whether such complaint be or be not well founded; and such verdict shall be conclusive on the subject of such complaint; and if such complaint shall be declared to be ill founded, then and in such case the said three persons shall award such compensation as they may deem just to be paid by the party making such complaint to the person or persons against whom such complaint may have been made, for his or her or their trouble and loss of time and expences occasioned by such unfounded complaint; and the money so awarded shall and may be recovered by all such means as any penalty might have been recovered in case the said complaint had been proved to be well founded.

11. And whereas disputes frequently arise between the buyer and seller, in respect of flax, yarn and cloth sold or agreed to be sold in fairs or markets; for remedy whereof, be it enacted, that if the buyer of any such flax, yarn, and cloth sold or agreed to be sold

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flax, yarn or linen not conformable to the regulations in this Act contained, or for any fraud or wilful default in the preparation or manufacture of such flax, yarn or linen so sold or offered for sale, and such justice or chief magistrate is hereby required and empowered, to summon before him three persons skilled in flax, yarn or linen, as the case may be, of whom one shall be named by the party making such complaint, another by the party against whom such complaint may be made, and the third by such justice or chief magistrate; and in default of either party making such nomination, *or in default of the attendance of either party so nominated,* such justice or chief magistrate shall nominate a person on behalf of the party so making default *either in nomination or attendance,* and the three persons so summoned shall be sworn by such justice or chief magistrate well and truly to examine the flax, yarn or linen, as the case may be, which is the subject of such complaint, and a true verdict to give whether such complaint be or be not well founded; and such verdict shall be conclusive on the subject of such complaint; and if such complaint shall be declared to be ill founded, then and in such case, the said three persons shall award such compensation as they may deem just to be paid by the party making such complaint to the person or persons against whom such complaint may have been made, for his, or her or their trouble and loss of time and and expences occasioned by such unfounded complaint; and the money so awarded, shall and may be recovered by all such means as any penalty might have been recovered in case the said complaint had been proved to be well founded.

Present Act.

sold in fair or market, shall without just cause refuse to pay to the person selling the same the price agreed upon between them, or if the seller shall without just cause refuse to deliver such flax, yarn or cloth to the person buying the same, or shall wilfully neglect to present the same for payment at the usual place of payment of the buyer within five hours after having sold the same, being duly informed of such place of payment, it shall be lawful for the buyer or seller of the same respectively to complain, at any time within 24 hours, to the next justice of the peace, or to the chief magistrate of any town where such dispute shall have arisen; and every such justice of the peace or magistrate is hereby required and authorized forth with to summon the parties to appear before such justice and some other justice or chief magistrate; and if it shall appear to such justices, or chief magistrate and justice, that the buyer shall without just and reasonable cause refuse or have refused to pay the seller the price first agreed upon between such buyer and seller at such fair or market, such justices of the peace, or magistrate and justice, may, by warrant under their hands and seals respectively, order such flax, yarn or cloth to be returned to the seller thereof, and may by such warrant, direct any penalty not exceeding the sum of 10 *s.* to be levied off the goods and chattels of the buyer thereof; and if it shall appear to such justices of the peace, or to such chief magistrate and justice that the seller shall without reasonable cause refuse or have refused to deliver up such flax, yarn or cloth to the person or persons to whom he had sold or agreed to sell the same, or shall have wilfully neglected to present the same for payment at the usual place of payment of the buyer within five hours after having sold the same, being duly informed of such place of payment, such justices of the peace, or chief magistrate and justice, may, by warrant under their hands and seals, order the same to be delivered up to the person who had bought or agreed to buy the same, and may also by such warrant direct any penalty not exceeding the sum of 10 *s.* to be levied off the goods and chattels of the seller.

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12. And whereas disputes frequently arise between the buyer and seller, in respect of flax, yarn and cloth sold or agreed to be sold in fairs or markets; for remedy whereof, be it enacted, that if the buyer of any such flax, yarn and cloth sold or agreed to be sold in fair or market, shall without just cause refuse to pay to the person selling the same the price agreed upon between them, or if the seller shall without just cause refuse to deliver such flax, yarn or cloth to the person buying the same, or shall wilfully neglect to present the same for payment at the usual place of payment of the buyer within five hours after having sold the same, being duly informed of such place of payment, it shall be lawful for the buyer or seller of the same respectively to complain, at any time within 24 hours, to the next justice of the peace, or to the chief magistrate of any town where such dispute shall have arisen; *provided, that if no such magistrate or justice shall be at hand to take cognizance of such dispute, then such complaint may be made at any time within the next 72 hours from the period of such dispute, and* every such justice of the peace or magistrate is hereby required and authorized forthwith to summon the parties to appear before such justice, and some other justice or chief magistrate; and if it shall appear to such justices, or chief magistrate and justice, that the buyer shall without just and reasonable cause refuse or have refused to pay the seller the price first agreed upon between such buyer and seller at such fair or market, such justices of the peace, or

12. Provided always, and be it enacted, that nothing in this Act contained shall extend or be construed to extend to nor shall affect any flax, yarn or linens not sold nor exposed for sale in open fair or market, it being the true intent and meaning of this Act, that all persons may manufacture and make up flax, yarn or linens in any manner they may think proper, and sell the same, without being subject to any regulations, penalties or provisions in this Act contained, unless they sell or expose for sale the same in open fair or market.

For settling disputes between buyer and seller in fairs and markets.

Proposed Act.	*Present Act.*
magistrate and justice, may, by warrant under their hands and seals respectively, order such flax, yarn or cloth to be returned to the seller thereof, and may by such warrant direct any penalty not exceeding the sum of 10 *s.* to be levied off the goods and chattels of the buyer thereof; and if it shall appear to such justices of the peace, or to such chief magistrate and justice, that the seller shall without reasonable cause refuse or have refused to deliver up such flax, yarn or cloth to the person or persons to whom he had sold or agreed to sell the same, or shall have wilfully neglected to present the same for payment at the usual place of payment of the buyer within five hours after having sold the same, being duly informed of such place of payment, such justices of the peace, or chief magistrate and justice, may, by warrant under their hands and seals, order the same to be delivered up to the person who had bought or agreed to buy the same, and may also by such warrant direct any penalty not exceeding the sum of 10 *s.* to be levied off the goods and chattels of the seller.	
Expunge sections 13, 14 & 15 present Act.	
13. *And be it enacted, that it shall and may be lawful for Her Majesty, her heirs and successors, by warrant under the Royal sign manual, to appoint a fit and proper person to be inspector-general of linen and yarn markets in Ireland, and also from time to time, at pleasure, to remove such inspector-general from his office, and in case of any vacancy in the said office, either by such removal or by death or otherwise, to appoint some other fit person to the said office.*	13. And whereas it is expedient and necessary that fit and proper persons should be provided to examine, measure, and stamp all brown or unbleached linens sold in public markets, in all cases where the buyers of any such linens shall require the said linens to be examined, measured, and stamped by any such persons, before they pay for the same; and to the end that no inconvenience should be felt from the want of any such persons upon and immediately after the commencement of this Act, be it enacted, that all persons who at any time before the commencement of this Act have been appointed or authorized to act as sealmasters of brown linen under the provisions of the said recited Act of the second and third years of his present Majesty's reign, and who shall be acting in that capacity at the time of the commencement of this Act, shall continue to act therein until the appointment or appointments of every such sealmaster respectively shall be afterwards confirmed or revoked in manner directed by this Act.
14. *And be it enacted, that the said inspector-general shall, and he is hereby empowered from time to time to appoint such persons as he may think fit, to be local inspectors of linen and yarn markets in Ireland, and to remove or discharge such officers at his pleasure, and to apportion to such local inspectors the several markets or districts at and within which their authority shall extend;* and such inspector-general is further empowered to make such general rules, orders and regulations, for the proceeding and governance of the said local inspectors, as in his judgment shall seem proper; which rules, orders and regulations, such inspectors are hereby required to obey and follow: Provided always, that copies of any such general rules, orders and regulations shall be transmitted within 21 days from the date of their being issued to the Lord-Lieutenant or other chief governor of Ireland for the time being; and in the event of the said Lord-Lieutenant or other chief-governor disallowing the same or any part thereof, which he is hereby empowered to do, within 14 days of the receipt of the same, such general rule, order or regulation, or the part thereof so disallowed, shall not come into operation.*	14. And be it enacted, that it shall and may be lawful for the Lord-Lieutenant or other chief governor or governors of Ireland for the time being, from time to time to nominate and appoint, in any and every county in which the linen manufacture or any branch thereof is or shall be carried on, twelve such persons, residing in such county, or buying or selling linens therein, as shall appear to be fit and proper persons, to be a committee for appointing, directing, and controlling the inspectors and brown linen sealmasters of such county, conformably to the regulations, provisions, and directions prescribed by this Act, of which nomination and appointment public notice shall be given in the Dublin Gazette, and in some paper published in every such county respectively; and in case of the death or resignation of any person appointed to be a member of such committee, and in case of any removal made by the Lord-Lieutenant or other chief governor or governors of Ireland for the time being of any person from the situation of member of the said committee, which removal the said Lord-Lieutenant or other chief governor or governors of Ireland for the time being is and are hereby empowered to make, it shall and may be lawful for such Lord-Lieutenant or other chief governor or governors of Ireland for the time being as aforesaid to nominate and appoint such other person or persons as he or they shall think fit, to be a member or members of such committee in the room and stead of the person or persons who shall have died or resigned, or who shall have been so removed; and notice of every such nomination or appointment shall be given in the Dublin Gazette and in any newspaper of the county to which such nomination shall relate.
15. *And*	15. Provided

* Notice of which appointment should be published in the Dublin Gazette, and in some newspaper generally circulated in the county, place, or district for which such appointment is made.

Proposed Act.

15. *And be it enacted, that a copy or copies of all such general rules, orders and regulations (not disallowed as aforesaid), shall be laid before both Houses of Parliament within six weeks of the receipt of the same, by the Lord-Lieutenant or other chief governor of Ireland, if Parliament be then sitting, or if Parliament be not sitting, then within six weeks after the next meeting thereof.*

Present Act.

15. Provided always, and be it enacted, that the persons appointed or authorized under the hereinbefore recited Act of the second and third years of the reign of his present Majesty to constitute committees in their several counties for the purposes of such Act, and who shall be acting in that capacity at or previous to the commencement of this Act, shall be and constitute, without further nomination or appointment, the respective committees in such counties for the purposes of this Act, and shall be deemed and taken to be and to have been appointed hereunder, and shall have power and authority accordingly to act in execution of this Act until or unless the Lord-Lieutenant or other chief governor or governors shall think fit to supersede such persons.

16. *And be it enacted, that the Lord Treasurer or Lords Commissioners of Her Majesty's Treasury, or any three of them, shall from time to time fix and determine the salaries to be paid to such inspector-general and such local inspectors respectively as aforesaid, which salaries shall be paid by the said Lord Treasurer or Lords Commissioners of Her Majesty's Treasury, out of the Consolidated Fund of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland.*

Expunge sections 16, 17, & 18.

16. And be it further enacted, that every such committee, having formed a list of all persons acting as sealmasters in the county for which such committee shall be appointed, shall then proceed to revise the said list; and it shall and may be lawful for every such committee, or any five or more of them, upon such revision, to dismiss any person from the situation of sealmaster whom they shall consider to be unfit for such situation, and to appoint another in place of the person so dismissed, and so from time to time to dismiss and appoint every such person as such committee, or any five or more of them, shall deem it right to dismiss from or appoint to the office and situation of a sealmaster of brown linen, limiting or extending the number of such sealmasters according as it shall seem to such committee to be expedient and necessary; and it shall and may be lawful for every such committee, or any five or more of them, to confine the duties and authorities of every sealmaster to such particular linen market or markets in their respective counties as they shall think proper, and to dismiss any sealmaster who shall refuse or neglect to obey any such rules, regulations, and directions as such committee shall lay down for the government of such sealmaster; provided that nothing contained in the said rules, regulations, and directions shall be contrary to any of the provisions of this Act.

17. Provided always, and be it enacted, that it shall and may be lawful for the Lord-lieutenant or other chief governor or governors of Ireland, in his or their discretion, to order and direct that such committee as aforesaid shall, within a time to be specified, make a report of the grounds upon which any dismissal of any sealmaster may have taken place by or under the orders of such committee, and such report such committee are hereby required to make accordingly, within such time as shall be specified for that purpose; and it shall and may be lawful for the Lord Lieutenant, or other chief governor or governors of Ireland for the time being, to direct that the matter of such report shall be inquired into by any person or persons to be named and appointed for that purpose by such Lord Lieutenant or other chief governor or governors of Ireland; and according to the result of such inquiry, or in case no report shall be made by such committee within the time so specified, it shall and may be lawful for the Lord Lieutenant, or other chief governor or governors of Ireland, either to confirm such dismissal, or to revoke the same, and to direct that the person so dismissed shall be restored to his situation of sealmaster.

18. And be it further enacted, that every person who shall, at or previous to the commencement of this Act, be acting as a sealmaster in any county, and desirous of continuing so to do, shall, within twenty days after the passing hereof, enter, with two sufficient sureties, into such security as hereinafter mentioned; and that every person who shall be, at any time after the passing of this Act, appointed a sealmaster shall, before doing any act by virtue of such appointment, enter, with two sufficient sureties, into such security as hereinafter mentioned; (that is to say), a security by writing obligatory to our sovereign lord the King, in such penal sum or sums as shall be directed by the committee for the county wherein such sealmaster shall act, such writing obligatory to be in such form of words as obligations to the King's Majesty are used to be made, for the performance of the conditions thereunder written; and the committee for each county shall have power and authority to take and cause such writing obligatory to be made and entered into; and all obligations so made shall be good and effectual in law, to all

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intents and purposes, as any obligation made to our sovereign lord hath heretofore been, or may be adjudged or taken to be; and the condition of every such security shall be, that the person so appointed a sealmaster shall duly and diligently execute his office, according to the regulations of this Act; and that such sealmaster, his executors or administrators, shall, duly and without delay, pay all such fines as shall be imposed on him from time to time by any justice or chief magistrate, and all such damages as may be awarded against him in any suit or proceeding under this Act; and that in case of the death of any of his sureties, such sealmaster will, within one month after such death shall have come to his knowledge, procure another sufficient person to enter into a like security; and that such sealmaster, his executors or administrators, will surrender and give up his seal or stamp when thereunto required by such committee, or any five or more of them; and that he will not at any time lend, hire out, or sell his stamp or seal, or suffer the same to be used by any person but himself, or his known servant or assistant, at his usual place of residence: Provided always, that no such writing obligatory to be made or entered into as aforesaid by any person who shall, at the commencement of this Act (but not otherwise), be acting as a sealmaster in any county, and who shall be desirous of continuing so to do, shall be subject to any stamp duty whatsoever imposed by any Act or Acts now in force, or to be imposed by any future Act or Acts, unless the same be specially subjected thereto in and by such future Act or Acts.

Expunge sections 19, 20, & 21.

19. And be it further enacted, that it shall and may be lawful for every such committee, or any five or more of them, to choose and prescribe the form and device of the seal or stamp to be used by the sealmaster of their respective county, and to alter the same as often as such committee shall think fit; and if any person shall forge or counterfeit any seal or stamp of any sealmaster appointed or to be appointed by such committee, or any five or more of them, to any piece or part of a piece of brown linen, such person, being thereof lawfully convicted, shall be imprisoned, with or without hard labour, for any period not exceeding one year, at the discretion of the judge or judges who shall try such offence.

20. And be it further enacted, that every sealmaster of brown linen, except such as are or shall be appointed to particular markets, shall reside within the parish mentioned on his seal; and that one of the persons who shall enter into security for him as aforesaid shall be resident within the same parish, or in or within one mile of the next market town thereto within the same county; and that a sealmaster appointed for any particular market shall be at liberty to use his seal or stamp in respect to all linens prepared for sale in such market, without reference to his place of residence.

21. And be it further enacted, that every sealmaster of brown or unbleached linen, appointed as aforesaid, shall carefully view, examine, and measure every piece of such linen which shall be produced and offered to him to be sealed; and if the same shall appear to him to be merchantable, and to be conformable to the directions in this Act contained, then, and not otherwise, such sealmaster shall affix, or cause to be affixed, a fair impression of such seal as shall be appointed for him by the said committee, with lamp black or vermilion, or stone blue, and size or common oil, on the middle of such fold, at no more than thirteen inches from the end of such piece, and shall likewise mark, or cause to be marked, with such ingredients as aforesaid, on the back or outside of every such piece, the length of such piece, and the number of inches it contains in breadth, and also the half inch, if the same shall be in breadth half an inch more than any number of inches (without regard to any lesser fractions of an inch), together with the name of such sealmaster, and the parish and county where he resides, or the name of the market town for which he may be appointed to act; and if any parts of such piece shall be damaged or faulty, but not so damaged or faulty as to render the same unmerchantable, every such damaged or faulty part shall be fairly exposed in the lap or bosom of such piece, so as that the same may be easily seen; and opposite to such damaged or faulty part, upon the bosom of every such piece, such sealmaster shall affix, or cause to be affixed, an impression of his seal, with such ingredients as aforesaid, to denote such damaged or faulty part; and such sealmaster shall and may demand and take the sum of one penny, and no more, for every piece of brown or unbleached linen, containing twenty-five yards or under, which shall be by him sealed as aforesaid, and so in proportion for a greater quantity; and if any such sealmaster shall offend by neglecting or transgressing any one of the regulations aforesaid, every such sealmaster shall forfeit a sum not less than five shillings nor exceeding twenty shillings for every such offence.

Expunge sections 22, 23, 24 & 25.

22. And be it further enacted, that no person shall in open fair or market in Ireland sell or expose to sale, buy or agree to buy, any pieces of brown or unbleached linen which shall not, at the time of selling or exposing the

Proposed Act. *Present Act.*

the same to sale, be sealed and marked as required by this Act, upon pain of forfeiting the sum of 5*s.* for every piece of linen so sold or exposed to sale.

23. And be it further enacted, that all brown linen shall be measured between seal and seal, and bad and insufficient ends shall not be taken into the length thereof; and such linen shall be bought and sold by no other measure than the statute yard containing 36 inches; and no extraordinary measure or allowance, except the breadth of a thumb, as is now generally practised, to every yard in the measuring thereof, shall be made therein by the seller to the buyer, or required or accepted of or taken by the buyer from the seller, upon pain that every person buying or selling any such linen contrary to the true intent and meaning of this Act shall forfeit not less than 2*s.* 6*d.* nor more than 5*s.* for every such offence.

24. And be it further enacted, that if any person shall sustain any loss or damage in the buying any piece of brown or unbleached linen by any damaged part being concealed in the folds thereof, or by its not answering the measure as to the length or breadth marked thereon by any sealmaster, it shall and may be lawful to and for such person to sue for and recover from the sealmaster of such piece, or the persons who shall at the time of such sealing be bound as security for his faithful discharge of the office of sealmaster, the full value of the loss or damage so sustained.

25. And be it further enacted, that it shall and may be lawful for the committees aforesaid, or any five of their body, to appoint inspectors for such brown linen and linen yarn and flax markets, within each of their said counties, as may appear to such committees necessary for the better regulation of such brown linen, linen yarn, and flax markets within such counties; and that it shall and may be lawful for such committees at any time to dismiss or discontinue such inspectors, and to appoint others in their places; provided that it shall not be lawful for such committees to impose any fine, charge, or impost whatsoever for the remuneration or emolument of such inspectors.

17. And be it further enacted, that every inspector shall have full power and authority to inspect and examine all brown linen, linen yarn, or flax, exposed for sale in any public market or fair *within the place or district for* which he shall have been appointed as aforesaid; and he is hereby authorized and required to seize any linen yarn or flax so sold or exposed for sale in public fair or market not conformable to the regulations prescribed in this Act; and such inspector shall forthwith carry such linen, yarn, or flax, before the next justice of the peace or other chief magistrate within their respective jurisdictions, to be dealt with according to law; and in case a justice of the peace or other magistrate cannot be forthwith found, then such inspector may detain such linen, yarn, or flax so seized, if *necessary, for* 48 *hours, or until the next market-day of such place in which such linen, flax, or yarn was so seized.*

26. And be it further enacted, that every such inspector so appointed shall have full power and authority to inspect and examine all brown linen, linen yarn, or flax, exposed for sale in any public market or fair to which he shall have been appointed as aforesaid; and he is hereby authorized and required to seize any linen, yarn, or flax so sold or exposed for sale in public fair or market not conformable to the regulations prescribed in this Act; and such inspector shall forthwith carry such linen, yarn, or flax before the next justice of the peace or other chief magistrate within their respective jurisdictions to be dealt with according to law; and in case a justice of the peace or other magistrate cannot be forthwith found, then such inspector may detain such linen, yarn, or flax so seized, if necessary, for 48 hours, but no longer, to be dealt with as aforesaid; and such inspector shall, as often as he may be called on by the committee of the county for which he shall act, return a diary or journal of his proceedings, and a true account of all linens, yarns, and flax by him seized or informed against, and also a true account of the fines imposed and levied or paid on such linens, yarns, or flax, and also pay the amount of the said fines received by him to such committee, when required so to do.

18. And be it further enacted, that if any person entrusted with any linen yarn, hempen yarn, or any one or more of those materials mixed with each other, *or mixed, or to be mixed, or made up with any other description of yarn,* or any tools, materials or apparatus for manufacturing the same, shall fraudulently sell, pawn, or embezzle such linen yarn, hempen yarn, cotton yarn, or each or any of them respectively, or such tools, materials, or apparatus, every such offender, and the receiver of any such article knowing the same to be or have been so fraudulently sold, pawned, or embezzled, shall *be imprisoned for not less than* 14 *days nor more than six months, with or without hard labour.*

27. And be it further enacted, that if any person entrusted with any linen yarn, hempen yarn, cotton yarn, or any one or more of those materials mixed with each other, or any tools, materials, or apparatus for manufacturing the same, shall fraudulently sell, pawn, or embezzle such linen yarn, hempen yarn, cotton yarn, or each or any of them respectively, or such tools, materials, or apparatus, every such offender, and the receiver of any such article knowing the same to be or have been so fraudulently sold, pawned, or embezzled, shall forfeit three times the value of the same.

Proposed Act.	*Present Act.*
19. And be it further enacted, that every weaver shall well and sufficiently weave all sound and sufficient linen yarn, and cotton yarn, and hempen yarn to him delivered to be woven within such time, and in such reeds, and into cloth of such breadths as shall be agreed upon between the owner or owners of such yarn and such weaver, upon pain of forfeiting the full value of such yarn, or the full price agreed upon for weaving the same.	28. And be it further enacted, that every weaver shall well and sufficiently weave all sound and sufficient linen yarn, and cotton yarn, and hempen yarn to him delivered to be woven, within such time, and in such reeds, and into cloth of such breadths as shall be agreed upon between the owner or owners of such yarn and such weaver, upon pain of forfeiting the full value of such yarn, or the full price agreed upon for weaving the same.
20. And be it further enacted, that if any person or persons who shall be entrusted with any linen, or linen yarn, or hempen yarn, or materials, or tools, or apparatus for manufacturing the same, shall refuse or neglect to return such yarn, materials, tools, or apparatus, within 48 *hours* after the same shall have been demanded by or in behalf of the owner thereof, such neglect or refusal shall be deemed and taken as embezzling under this Act, *unless reasonable cause be shown to the satisfaction of any justice or chief magistrate before whom such case shall be heard why such return has or cannot be made within the said period of* 48 *hours.*	29. And be it further enacted, that if any person or persons who shall be entrusted with any linen, or linen yarn, or hempen yarn, or materials, or tools, or apparatus for manufacturing the same, shall refuse or neglect to return such yarn, materials, tools, or apparatus within 14 days after the same shall have been demanded by or in behalf of the owner thereof, such neglect or refusal shall be deemed and taken as embezzling under this Act.
21. And be it further enacted, that in case any manufacturer shall make oath before a justice of the peace that he has entrusted any linen yarn, hempen or cotton yarn, or the materials, tools, or apparatus for manufacturing the same, to any person or persons, and that he has just cause to suspect and does suspect that such person is about to abscond with the same, then such justice shall have power and authority, at his discretion, to issue his warrant requiring such person or persons *to appear before him forthwith, or at such time as he shall appoint; and such justice is hereby authorized to order such person or persons to restore the article or thing entrusted to him or them, at such time as he may direct, and in default thereof, to commit such person or persons to the common gaol of the county or place in which the offence is committed, for any period not exceeding six calendar months, with or without hard labour: provided always, that the owner of such materials or apparatus as aforesaid shall make to such offender such reasonable compensation for any labour expended therein or thereupon as to such justice shall seem proper.*	30. And be it further enacted, that in case any manufacturer shall make oath before a justice of the peace that he has entrusted any linen yarn, hempen or cotton yarn, or the materials, tools, or apparatus for manufacturing the same, to any person or persons, and that he has just cause to suspect and does suspect that such person is about to abscond with the same, then such justice shall have power and authority, at his discretion, to issue his warrant requiring such person or persons to restore the article or thing entrusted to him or them, and in default thereof to apprehend such person or persons, and bring him or them before him or some other justice of the peace for the same county; and unless such person or persons shall give security for the return of the article or thing so entrusted to him or them within a time then mentioned, such justice shall, by warrant, order any constable to enter the house of such person or persons, and give possession of such article or thing to the owner thereof, such owner making such reasonable compensation for any labour expended therein or thereupon as to such justice shall seem proper.

22. *Section* 31 *of the present Act to remain in force, and to become Section* 22 *of the proposed Act.*

23. And be it further enacted, that all complaints which shall be made of any offence or offences committed against any of the regulations or directions contained in this Act shall and may be heard by any one justice of the peace acting within his jurisdiction, or by the chief magistrate of any town presiding in his court in such town; and for that purpose such justice or magistrate shall and may *summon and* examine any person or persons upon oath; and in default of the payment of any such penalty or sum of money as shall be awarded by any such justice or chief magistrate by virtue of this Act, upon the hearing of any such complaint, it shall and may be lawful for such justice or chief magistrate to levy the same, by warrant of distress under his hand and seal, on and off the goods and chattels of the person liable to the payment of such penalty or sum of money, rendering the overplus, if any, after payment of the costs and expenses of such distress, to such person; and in case no sufficient distress shall be found, then to commit such person to gaol, or to the house of correction, for any period not exceeding *three calendar months, with or without hard labour.*

Proposed Act.

Expunge Sections 33 & 34, present Act.

Present Act.

24. *And be it further enacted, that in case any person who shall have been robbed or defrauded of any yarn after the same shall have been boiled, shall make oath before any chief magistrate or justice that he has reason to believe that such yarn, or any portion thereof, is illegally or improperly in the possession of any individual, it shall be lawful for such chief magistrate or justice, if he shall think fit, to grant a warrant to search the house or premises of such individual suspected of having such stolen or fraudulently obtained yarn in his possession; and in the event of any boiled yarn being so found on the premises, which the person making complaint is willing to swear he believes to the best of his judgment to be his property, such chief magistrate or justice may forthwith require the person possessing the same satisfactorily to account to him of the manner in which, and of the person or persons of whom, he obtained such suspected yarn, and in default of his doing so, he shall be adjudged guilty of knowing the same to have been fraudulently sold, pawned, or embezzled, and be subjected to the punishment awarded for such offence by this statute.*

31. And be it further enacted, that in all cases where by the provisions of this Act any oath or affidavit is authorized or required to be taken, the solemn affirmation of any person being a Quaker or Moravian shall be sufficient in the place of such oath or affidavit; and every person who shall knowingly swear or affirm anything false in any such oath or affirmation shall be deemed and taken to be guilty of perjury, and being lawfully convicted thereof, suffer such punishment as persons convicted of wilful and corrupt perjury are by the laws in force in Ireland subject to.

32. And be it further enacted, that all complaints which shall be made of any offence or offences committed against any of the regulations or directions contained in this Act, the penalty or forfeiture in respect whereof shall not exceed in amount or value the sum of five pounds, shall and may be heard by any one justice of the peace acting within his jurisdiction, or by the chief magistrate of any town presiding in his court in such town; and for that purpose such justice or magistrate shall and may examine any person or persons upon oath; and in default of the payment of any such penalty or sum of money as shall be awarded by any such justice or chief magistrate by virtue of this Act upon the hearing of any such complaint, it shall and may be lawful for such justice or chief magistrate to levy the same, by warrant of distress under his hand and seal, on and off the goods and chattels of the person liable to the payment of such penalty or sum of money, rendering the overplus, if any, after payment of the costs and expenses of such distress, to such person; and in case no sufficient distress shall be found, then to commit such person to gaol or to the house of correction for any period not exceeding one calendar month, unless such penalty or sum of money shall be sooner paid.

33. And be it further enacted, that in all cases where any sealmaster shall be complained against for having committed any offence under this Act, if such sealmaster shall reside more than five miles distant from the place in which such complaint shall be made, it shall be sufficient if the summons issued against him to answer such complaint be proved on oath to be put into the post-office of the town in which such complaint has been so made, and addressed to such sealmaster by his name, residence, and occupation; provided such summons be so put in the post-office of such town aforesaid four days previous to the day appointed for the hearing of such complaint.

34. And be it further enacted, that if any sealmaster of any one county shall commit any offence punishable by this Act, and the piece of linen in respect whereof such offence shall have been committed be sold or exposed for sale and seized in another county, the complaint made against such sealmaster shall be heard before and determined by, and the penalty levied under the warrant of any justice of the peace of the county in which such piece of linen shall be sold, offered for sale, or seized, as if the default or neglect of such sealmaster in respect of such piece of linen had been committed in the county in which such piece of linen was seized.

25. And be it further enacted, that any penalty which shall be awarded and levied by any justice of the peace or chief magistrate, in pursuance of the provisions of this Act, shall and may be directed by such justice or chief magistrate to be applied in manner following; that is to say, in every case where the person preferring the complaint shall appear to have suffered any damage, costs, loss of time, or other injury in the matter being the subject of complaint,

35. And be it further enacted, that any penalty which shall be awarded and levied by any justice of the peace or chief magistrate, in pursuance of the provisions of this Act, shall and may be directed by such justice or chief magistrate to be applied in the manner following; that is to say, in every case where the person preferring the complaint shall appear to have suffered any damage, costs, loss of time, or other injury in the matter being the subject of complaint,

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Proposed Act.	*Present Act.*
any such penalty, *or any proportionate part thereof,* shall and may be paid to such person; or if no damages, costs, loss of time, or other injury shall appear to have been sustained by such person, then such penalty shall be *awarded, one-half to the informer, and the remainder to the general funds of the Poor-law union in which such offence shall have been committed.*	any such penalty shall and may be paid to such person; or if no damages, costs, loss of time, or other injury shall appear to have been sustained by such person, then such penalty shall be paid to the committee appointed in manner hereinbefore directed in the county in which the complaint originated, to be applied by such committee towards forming a fund for defraying any expenses in executing the duties assigned to them by this Act; or it shall and may be lawful for such justice or chief magistrate to direct any portion of any such penalty so levied to be paid to the party aggrieved, and the remaining portion of such penalty to be paid to such committee.
Expunge section 36 present Act.	36. And be it further enacted, that all penalties and forfeitures incurred under any clause or article in this Act, exceeding in amount or value 5 *l.*, and not exceeding in amount or value 20 *l.*, shall and may be sued for and recovered, by any person who will sue for the same, by civil bill before the assistant barrister of the county in which the penalty or forfeiture shall have been incurred; and that all such penalties and forfeitures exceeding in amount or value 20 *l.*, shall and may be sued for and recovered, by any person who will sue for the same, by suit or action at law, or by bill, plaint, or information in any of His Majesty's Courts of King's Bench, Common Pleas, or Exchequer in Ireland, wherein no essoign, protection, nor wager of law, nor more than one imparlance, shall be allowed; and that in all such actions, suits, or prosecutions which shall be brought or prosecuted for recovery of such forfeitures or penalties, the venue shall be laid in the county, or in the county of the city, or the county of the town wherein such forfeitures or penalties were incurred, and in none other.
26. And be it further enacted, that if any action or suit shall be commenced or brought against any person for doing or causing to be done any act, matter, or thing in pursuance of this Act, the defendant or defendants in such action or suit shall and may plead the general issue, and give this Act and the special matter in evidence; and if upon such action or in such suit judgment shall be given for the defendant or defendants, or the plaintiff or plaintiffs therein shall become nonsuit, or discontinue his, her, or their action or suit, the defendant or defendants therein shall have double costs.	37. And be it further enacted, that if any action or suit shall be commenced or brought against any person for doing, or causing to be done, any act, matter, or thing in pursuance of this Act, the defendant or defendants in such action or suit shall and may plead the general issue, and give this Act and the special matter in evidence; and if upon such action or in such suit judgment shall be given for the defendant or defendants, or the plaintiff or plaintiffs therein shall become nonsuit, or discontinue his, her, or their action or suit, the defendant or defendants therein shall have double costs.
27. And be it further enacted, that this Act shall commence and take effect from and after the end of this present session of Parliament, and shall continue and be in force for two years, and from thence to the end of the then next session of Parliament.	38. And be it further enacted, that this Act shall commence and take effect from and after the end of this present session of Parliament, and shall continue and be in force for two years, and from thence to the end of the then next session of Parliament.

Sir *Robert Bateson*, Bart., Examined.

You are, I believe, mayor of Londonderry?—I am.

And also, I believe, an acting member of the committee of the Templemoyle agricultural seminary?—I am.

Are you aware that a considerable number of the hand-loom weavers in the county of Derry are also occupiers of land?—About one-third are occupiers of land, and the rest are cottiers.

To what extent are their holdings, generally?—The occupiers of land hold from two to ten acres, some few more; the majority, however, are the small holdings. The cottier holdings are generally what are commonly called *tacks*, which consist of a house, grass for a cow, half an acre of land to sow corn, and as much ground as they can cover with manure, which manure is carried out for them, and the ground prepared by ploughing; half a rood of flax ground, a certain number of loads of mire or turf mould to make manure of, and some turf, if any be convenient. For this cottiers' tack, they pay, according to locality, from 4*l.* to 6*l.* per annum.

What is the tenure on which they usually occupy?—Cottiers, of course, at will. The landholders are very various. Some, but not many now, under middle-men, and are also a

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will. Those on Church lands have a lease of years, less by one or two years than that of the first tenants. Where the lands are in fee, the tenure varies; either a lease of lives and years, or of years.

Do you think the system of cultivation they adopt is usually perfect, or incomplete?—Miserably deficient; the small landholders are generally inferior from want of capital to those having large farms.

In what, especially, is it deficient?—In want of capital, and still more of information; in the misapplication of the capital they all possess, manual labour; and lastly, in the keeping of a horse, which consumes (though half starved) a large proportion of the produce, deprives the horned cattle of their proper food, makes an inferior manure, and if the owner has no other means of employment (which is seldom the case), is unemployed more than half the year.

Be pleased to state, in detail, the mode in which you think the productiveness of these holdings might be increased?—If the small landholder has not constant and profitable employment for his horse when he is not labouring on the land, I would commence by disposing of him, which would immediately yield a certain increased capital and diminish expense. In exchange for the plough, horse, harrow, and cart, must be substituted the spade, shovel, rake, hoe, grape, wheel and hand barrow, and a light harrow with wooden teeth, the entire expense of all which would be less than the cost of a very indifferent plough. With these implements, of course, it is intended to do the work of the farm, instead of with those for which the horse was designed; but the tools are not all that should be changed: the entire system of the farm must be altered. From repeated conversations with intelligent gardeners and farmers I have established this point, that an able-bodied man may cultivate, single handed, from four to five acres of land of a medium quality (not too stiff), under the four-shift rotation, which I shall presently explain. How much easier can this be done, when it is the occasional labour of two or three men, or grown-up lads, which you will often find in hand-loom weavers, country carpenters, or blacksmith's families, who are all a species of artisans who rarely command full employment; and when to these are added the assistance of women and children, for whom in this country it is so difficult to procure any occupation, I am convinced the adoption of hand cultivation on farms of from four to six acres would be the first step towards the general improvement of this country. Let us suppose a farm of four acres and a half, under the four-shift rotation. It is not necessary, if the ground be in one field, that it should be made into subdivisions by fences, as the cattle are expected to be principally in the house, except a little after harvest, when, if out, they should be tethered. I divide the ground into nine equal portions.*

1. House, offices, and garden.

2 & 3. In potatoes and in vegetables, such as turnips, cabbage, mangel-wurzel, rape, carrots, and parsnips; one of these divisions being appropriated solely for the supply of the cattle.

4 & 5, being those which last year were in potatoes, turnips, &c., are to be in barley or oats, layed down with clover and grass seeds.

6 & 7, being the two last years in barley and oats, and this year with clover and grass, which will both give an ample supply of green summer feeding and some hay.

8 & 9, the two remaining portions are the clover, &c. of last year; on which wheat or oats, with a little lime, if convenient and reasonable, will make out a profitable and simple rotation.

Under this system of labour occupation is given for the whole year, and only three acres and the garden dug over in each. The quantity of produce raised will, in most cases, be nearly treble that under the old and ordinary system. Now, mark the saving. On a farm of 12 acres, under the former plan, a horse is kept for which there is not half work, and yet he must be maintained. One and a half acres of potatoes can scarcely be planted, with an insufficiency of dung, and that of bad quality, from the bad condition of the cattle that makes it; about four acres of oats, only one and a half acre of which is in fit condition for a grain crop, and an extra quantity of seed and labour to ensure anything at all from the others; probably an acre of flax ground contributing to the impoverishing the rest of the farm. The remaining portion of the farm is lea-ground, left so in poverty, and without grass seeds; to endeavour by rest to recover the exhaustion, the miserable manner in which it has been laboured induced.—Look at the four and a half acres farm under the system I have recommended. The two acres of grain produces a greater bulk of corn, one year with another, than the four above mentioned, and more than the seed of two acres saved. The acre of potatoes and vegetables

* The reason why there should be nine divisions of the land may be further stated thus: One being always in garden, the other eight are under the four-shift rotation; but by observing the eight divisions, and by making ground that bore the potato crop when next manured to carry turnips, and the ground that had turnips, &c., to carry potatoes; what had wheat, oats, or barley one year, to carry a different grain to what it last bore; and by that means, though under the four-shift system, a greater period of time is put between the same crop occupying the ground, one of the greatest desiderata to be obtained either in farming or gardening, and which is too often overlooked, as it is generally understood that each crop draws from the ground a nutriment peculiar to itself, and though the land may not be exhausted by the crop, yet it requires not only a peculiar manure, but rest from bearing that particular crop to properly qualify it for again producing it.

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vegetables will also give a third more than the one and a half acres on the old system; and see the saving of seed and labour. Instead of the cattle being starved daily on the barren lea, they are regaling in abundance of clover, &c. in the house, and making an ample return of manure to the land, greatly superior, both in quantity and quality, to what would be made on the 12 acres, where little or none is made in summer; the season when manure, from the succulent nature of the food, is more adapted for mixing with the mire or moulds generally used in this country. We have here a greater bulk of produce; a great diminution of expense in seed, labour, rent and taxes, and no fear of the total ruin that has often been brought on a petty farmer by the loss of his horse, which, with all care, must happen some time or other.

What stock do you consider might be kept on a farm of four acres and a half cultivated on the system you are recommending?—As many as three cows have been kept in excellent condition on the quantity of ground already stated,* and for two pigs. One acre of the grain will at all times pay the rent, and there is the pig, butter, and vegetables, a good deal of which may be disposed of.

Explain more in detail, if you please, the division of labour consequent on the working of your plan?—Assuming that the land is not of a very tenacious nature, an able-bodied man can dig the three acres cultivated each year in from 60 to 72 days. The acre for green crops will require to be turned over a second time, and require ten days more. For pulverizing the ground for grain, the light harrow with wooden teeth will be quite sufficient, and will be easy work for two men, or a man and woman. The two acres of grain being in four divisions. will be sown at four intervals, and the harrowing of the two acres will occupy from four to six days of two men, according to the quality of the soil and state of the weather at the time of digging. The number of days employed in these operations therefore will be from 80 to 90, and this will allow ample time and leisure for every other operation on the farm. The potato planting commences in the end of March, and may go on at intervals through the two succeeding months, when the turnip husbandry commences. The growing wheat after the clover prevents the pressure of labour that would occur by putting down all the grain crops in spring.

Could there be any saving in seed per acre?—The quantity of seed for land in the condition the ground ought to be in under this system of cultivation, will be from a third to a fourth as to quality of soil and condition less than under the old plan. This of itself is a considerable saving.

In proposing as you do to discontinue the use of the horse on these small farms, how would you provide for the sending the produce to market, and drawing turf and mire, and such occupations in which the horse is occasionally engaged?—I am quite prepared to meet that question. If some of these small farmers kept a horse, as no doubt they would do, instead of all, as now, it would be more beneficial to all, for in that case the horse would become productive to its owner. The great saving effected by those who did not keep a horse would enable them to hire for the drawing of their turf; and their system of cultivation would be further improved, by their being induced under such circumstances to provide for their marketable produce, the most valuable and most easily transported articles, such as wheat, butter, pigs, flax, &c., the carriage of which would be comparatively a trifling expense compared with the keep of a horse.

Are you aware of any places in which the plan you recommend, or any similar one, has been successfully adopted?—It has been in successful operation in many places; in Armagh, on Lord Gosford's estates, under the superintendence of Mr. Blacker, a most eminent agriculturist; also in Fermanagh, on the estate of Mr. Creighton, and in parts of Wexford. It is much more extensively practised in the Netherlands, and has been mentioned in the works of several travellers, particularly by Mr. Ratcliffe, who was sent over expressly by the Irish Farming Society near 20 years ago; and had there been the same system or spirit of improvement amongst the Irish gentry, when he published his report, that there is at present, I have no doubt but the practice would have become general ere this.

Have you read the observations of Mr. Nicholls, the Poor-law Commissioner in Ireland, on the Belgian system of farming, which I transmitted you some time ago?—I have; and I agree fully with him in every passage which you marked for my attention, and also in every one connected with the Belgian small farms. I am also convinced, that the future prosperity of many parts of Ireland rests solely on the adoption of that system, and my opinion is, that Government ought to circulate as largely as possible some cheap work on that subject, and by urging it on the minds of the public through the medium of every Parliamentary report with which it could have any connection, I have no doubt but it would ultimately be brought into general operation. There are large tracts in Ireland where the entire tenantry are these small holders, and all cultivating on the old fashion. In seasons of scarcity the entire population are next to starving; the landlords get nothing, and they have frequently been obliged to supply their tenants with seed, corn, and potatoes. Under an improved method of culture there would be a surplus on most of these lands, for many of them are exceedingly fertile and good, especially some in the county of Fermanagh.

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* It requires the land to be of a superior quality to carry three cows, but where there is one less there may be a pig more.

One of the greatest advantages the improved method of culture possesses is, that though farming, properly so called, requires the largest capital of any branch of business in order to become productive, yet the five-acre holding requires the least; for instead of the great outlay in implements, and their wear and tear in the former, the principal tool in the latter is the arm, which in a young and active person is constantly improving, even to a considerable age. I might quote the opinions of many experienced farmers in England and elsewhere on this subject, and I may offer my own, for I have been astonished at the quantity of work done in the day, or week, by an aged gardener, hedger, or thatcher; whereas, with the plough or cart, youth and activity are almost regarded as indispensable. I am satisfied that proof upon proof could be given, that five acres of land cultivated as I have suggested, will yield an equal produce with ten acres well cultivated on the old plan, and with a saving of near two-thirds of the seed, and will produce equal to fifteen acres cultivated as many, indeed too many, farms in this country now are. The wonder is where a shilling of the rent comes from, and how the farmer subsists at all.

To what extent then, generally, do you think it desirable to limit the size of farms in Ireland?—The size of farms has been a point much discussed both in Scotland and England, and it is generally agreed that where farming is scientifically followed, and there is a capital proportioned to the extent of ground occupied, a large farm makes a greater return of profit than a small one. The farmer's family must be sustained, whether large or small. The buildings, working cattle, tools, &c. &c., are laid in, maintained, repaired, and housed at considerably less expense on a farm of 500 or 1,000 acres, than they would be on 10 farms of 50 or 100 acres. This principle, which has an application to the small farms into which a great part of Ireland is unfortunately subdivided, does not apply in the same manner to the small holdings to be cultivated by the spade solely. There are a great number of estates in Ireland, with farms, that one with another would not average 10 or 12 acres. The landlords may be, and I believe the most part are, humane and indulgent, but many of these people pay little or no rent, in some seasons none at all, and when they get much in arrear, they become reckless, and cultivate the land even worse than before. Now if the landlord was properly alive to his own and his tenant's interest, he should immediately increase the extent of these holdings, wherever the tenants showed they had the skill, means and taste for improvement; and this he could, or rather might do, by two means: by reducing all the farms (so called) that are under 15 acres, and above four or five, to the latter size, or by being assisted by Government in emigration, or colonizing improvable parts of Ireland, to either of which he should of course contribute. By these means, he would be enabled to increase his other farms to a more profitable extent, and at the same time avoid the misery that would result from discharging any of the superabundant population. But unless the landlord has a purse superior to most of his Irish brethren, he cannot do either of these things single-handed; nor without the strong recommendation of Government, could they, if capable, attempt it in many parts of Ireland, as the priests are to a man opposed to any thing that would diminish the number of their flock, as it is by numbers and increase of population that they derive, in country parts, their income. But to return to the small holdings, if the landlords would take by the hand some intelligent holders of from 2 ½ to five acres, and instruct them, they might, by a gentle compulsion, induce probably all the small holders to imitate the example. I really believe that this, and this alone, can save this country.

What are the ordinary rotatory crops on a 10 or 12 acre farm cultivated under the present system, which you have so much condemned?—An acre, and sometimes a few perches more, are in potatoes, manured by dung made by cattle never in good condition, and the manure itself reduced in quality by a quantity of mire which increases its bulk, and makes it go further. The potatoes are succeeded by a tolerable crop of oats or barley. These are succeeded by a second crop of oats, of course greatly inferior in produce, and requiring more seed and additional labour, in what is provincially called hinting and shovelling; that is, digging the furrows between sides and scattering the clay over the ridge. Unless the land is of such a quality as to carry a third crop, which is very rare, it is left to rest for some years without grass seeds; and upon the poor herbage that springs spontaneously on this impoverished soil, their cattle are supported. After as long a rest as they can give, the lea is broken up for a crop of corn, which is sometimes followed by flax, and corn succeeds, followed by potatoes, and so that on the 12 acres there will be one acre, seldom more, of potatoes; from three to four acres of corn, not equal in produce to two, and sometimes an acre of flax, leaving the principal part of the ground in poverty, to be alone recruited by rest. Of course, where sea manure is abundant, or lime and fuel to burn it, the farms are better treated, at the inclination of the occupier; but the common system is as above, and by it you will perceive that 4 ½ acres under a better and different system would produce an equal return; and the additional rent, seed, cost of materials and tools, would give abundance, where now is misery and want, and the ruinous consequences resulting from them.

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Sir, Anvale Keady, Ireland, 1 December 1838.

I SHALL endeavour to give a brief reply to the queries you have been pleased to send me.

Query 1. Are you a member of any, and what committee, for appointing seal-masters, inspectors, &c.?

I am a member of the Linen Committee of the county of Armagh.

2. Can you state the number of seal-masters and inspectors appointed by or acting under your committee; the markets for which they are appointed, and their names, addresses, and other occupations?

I do not exactly know how many seal-masters are in this county, perhaps 40 or 50, which were appointed generally. There were several yarn inspectors; but from the defect in the Linen Act, and the consequent difficulty they had in imposing fines, they have now ceased to act. There is still one linen inspector in the county.

3. Do the inspectors make periodical, or any, returns to the committee of the amount of fines they have levied; if so, what are they, and what has been their application?

The linen inspector keeps a book, in which the duty done by him is detailed, and the amount of fines levied marked, which, when required, he produces to the committee. The amount of the fines is always given to him for his trouble, there being no other means of remunerating him.

4. Are you of opinion that any considerable quantity of hand-spun yarn is sold deficient in count and length?

I am convinced that a large portion of the hand-spun yarn sold is deficient in count and length.

5. Would you recommend any more efficient regulation of the yarn market, and of what kind?

I would recommend that an efficient system of inspection be adopted, by the payment of a small salary to each inspector, and granting them the power of retaining the cloth, yarn, &c. found fraudulent and seized until the next market-day, instead of 48 hours, as *see* sec. 26, 5 & 6 Will. 4, c. 27.

6. Are you of opinion that the substitution of mill-spun for hand-spun yarn, as far as it extends, has been beneficial or otherwise to any and what class of persons engaged in the linen manufacture, and in what manner?

It is my opinion that the introduction of mill-spun yarn has benefited the linen trade generally, more particularly that of the finer fabrics; as, by rendering fine linens so much cheaper, it has increased the consumption.

7. Is it your opinion that the mill-spun yarn will ultimately supersede the hand-spun altogether, or to what extent?

It is most likely that mill-spun will at last supersede hand-spun yarn, but not for some time yet to come.

8 & 9. Do you consider there is much embezzlement or theft of linen yarn by weavers or their families, and is it carried on to an extent to affect detrimentally the trade, by lowering the quality of the article produced; or in any other manner?—Are the present laws sufficient to punish or check this offence, and the purchasing of stolen or embezzled yarn; and if not, what enactment would you substitute?

I believe that there is a good deal of the yarn embezzled which is given out to be woven, and that the quality of the article is deteriorated in consequence; but I do not think any law would correct this offence so effectually as a well-arranged system among the employers of fines on the bad, and rewards to the good or honest, weavers.

10 & 11. Do the present laws afford manufacturers adequate facility for the recovery of property entrusted to weavers, in cases of suspected embezzlement, or other dishonesty?—What enactment would be advisable on this subject?

The present law, 5 & 6 Will. 4, c. 27, does not give an adequate facility to master manufacturers for the recovery of property entrusted to weavers. I think the power of justices at petty sessions should be increased (*see* sec. 32) from one month to not less than one nor more than six months imprisonment, with hard labour.

12. Has the condition of the hand-loom weavers' families been much depressed by the falling off in the quantity and amount of remuneration of yarn spun by them, and to what other occupation have they now recourse as a substitute?

In some districts females who formerly spun now weave, and this, to a certain extent, must better their condition.

13. Are

13. Are there great numbers of weavers, and in what localities, now weaving for manufacturers who formerly wove for the market; under what circumstances has such a change been effected, and at what period; and has it benefited or depressed the condition of the weavers?

Some 40 years ago, all weavers wove for public market; but then the demand exceeded the supply, and every one was amply paid. The improvement in cotton machinery, by lowering its price, reduced that of linen, and diminished the amount of remuneration to all persons engaged in the trade.

I greatly fear that the only way by which we can hope for an extended home consumption of linen is by such improvements in machinery as will bring the two articles nearly to a level in price, and it is more than probable that the power-loom will be one of these improvements.

14, 15 & 16. Is it your opinion that the entire trade of linen weaving, or what portion of it, will ultimately fall into the hands of master manufacturers?—What are the relative advantages and disadvantages of manufacturers giving out materials to be woven for them at a price, and purchasing webs in the public market?—What is the condition, moral and physical, of the hand-loom weavers in your district?

When trade is brisk, more cloth is woven for manufacturers; when flat, for the public market. I think this state of things likely to continue, and it is highly desirable that it should, as it affords the weaver a market for his labour under any circumstances. The advantages of a weaver working for a manufacturer are a saving of time in going to market, and avoiding temptation when there. The manufacturer will, in general, provide better and more evenly yarns to be woven; but it is well known that no one will weave so good a web for another as he will for himself.

The rural population generally are the hand-loom weavers; and I think their moral condition will compare with any others of the same class of society in the empire. Wages, however, for two years have been very low; they are now advancing, and, on the whole, their present prospects are much better than they have been for some time.

17 & 18. Are there more or less female weavers in your neighbourhood than formerly; and at what period, and under what circumstances, did such increase or diminution take place?—Has such increase or diminution had any, and what, effect, on the wages of the male weavers?

There are more females now weaving than formerly, because they make better wages than by spinning. I do not think that they have affected the wages of male weavers; demand regulates wages. Female weavers are employed on the lighter and less valuable fabrics.

19. Has the quality of the flax produced in Ireland deteriorated, or improved, since the breaking up of the Linen Board, or from any particular period; and from what causes has the deterioration or improvement arisen?

Of late years the quality of flax produced in this district is much improved, and great attention is now paid to its culture and after-management; still there is a great deal of bad flax grown, and much careless management, owing to the fact that some flax buyers will buy anything, no matter how inferior, if at a sufficiently low price.

20 & 21. Would it be desirable to extend the growth and cultivation of flax in Ireland, and in what particular provinces and counties?—If desirable, what would be the most likely means of effecting the object?

It would be most desirable to extend the cultivation of flax in the south and west of Ireland. The land there is better calculated for it than in the north. It would supply a green crop after wheat, and afford more employment to the poor of both sexes than any other crop. I am not sufficiently acquainted with the state of society there to say how it should be introduced; but means cannot be wanting, and it is manifestly the interest of the Government and landowners to provide the poor with a source of employment natural to them, easily introduced, requiring little capital, and the produce sure to find a market at home for an almost unlimited quantity.

22, 23 & 24. Are there any defects in the present Linen Act which you think it expedient to amend, and what remedies would you propose to adopt?—Are you of opinion that the linen trade of Ireland is an increasing or decreasing trade, and from what circumstances?—Would it be likely to be extended, or improved, or the condition of the weavers, or any other class engaged in it, benefited, by new Legislative enactments, and of what character?

I think the linen trade in Ireland is increasing and will greatly increase, if, by prudent commercial treaties, our present opening to the Continent of Europe is extended; farther than this I am not aware how Legislative enactments can benefit us, except by a few alterations in the Linen Act, such as that alluded to in reply to Queries 10 & 11, and perhaps by rendering the office of inspector more respectable and more efficient.

William Kirk.

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Report of R. M. Muggeridge, Esq.

Sir, Ross Lodge, Antrim, 4 Dec. 1838.

I AM favoured with your circular of 21st ultimo, and now beg to reply to the queries therein contained. In answer to query 1, I am a member of the county Antrim Linen Committee.

For the specific returns alluded to in queries 2 and 3, permit me to refer you to the secretary of the county Antrim Linen Committee, Linen Hall, Belfast, or to Thomas Morea Birnie, Esq., Dunminning, near Ballymena. It is true I might procure these returns, and forward them to you; but as this would necessarily incur more delay than I consider proportioned to their importance, and as they are bulky documents which would subject me to considerable expense of postage, I have deemed it better not to lose time in seeking for them, leaving it to you to make the application as above directed, if you continue to think it expedient to have them. My answer to query 4 is a negative; and to query 5, I beg to state there are two inspectors for the yarn markets of Ballymena, Ballymoney, and Portglenone (which are the principal yarn markets in this county), who I have every reason to believe do their duty, and I therefore do not feel it necessary to recommend a more efficient regulation of the yarn markets. In reply to query 6, I am of opinion, that the substitution of mill-spun for hand-spun yarn has been beneficial; it can be woven in one half of the time. A female weaver can weave a linen web of mill-spun yarn in less than six days, which a few years since, when nothing but hand-spun yarn was to be obtained, would have kept a male weaver busy for 12 days. My answer to query 7 is, that the mill-spun yarn has already nearly superseded the hand-spun, and I think will continue to have the preference. In answer to query 8, I regret to state, that there is a disposition unfortunately too prevalent among the poorest class of weavers, either partially or entirely, to embezzle the yarn entrusted to them to weave. It is not, however, suffered to prevail in this county to such an extent as to affect detrimentally the trade, the present laws being sufficient to punish or check this offence, and to afford the manufacturers adequate facility for the recovery of property entrusted to weavers; the last sentence replies to queries 9, 10, and 11. In reply to query 12, many of the former spinners have now become weavers, by which latter occupation they are at present tolerably well remunerated. Those who persist in spinning certainly have and are likely to have a very inadequate remuneration. To query 13, I answer that there are many weavers now employed by manufacturers, to whom a certain stipulated sum is paid as wages, and their condition is in so far benefited, that they can calculate with certainty on the remuneration they are to get. Some weavers, however, still prefer to take their chance of the market, notwithstanding the incertitude necessarily attending it, and often succeed in getting prices which afford them higher wages than those who weave for manufacturers. I am therefore of opinion (in answer to query 14), that it will be a long time before the entire trade of linen weaving shall fall into the hands of master manufacturers, though I admit that a large portion of it has already done so. In reply to query 15, the advantages of manufacturers (supposing such to be also bleachers and finishers) giving out materials to be woven, are the power of arranging, to have linens made of the sets immediately wanted, and of varying, so as always to suit the demand; also the saving of buyers' commission and expenses attending different markets, which they must need incur if they do not manufacture. The disadvantages arise from the moral condition of the weavers; viz. the disposition to embezzle before alluded to, and the unpleasant necessity of being strict in enforcing the law in a sufficient degree to counteract this. As to the physical condition of the weavers (to complete the answer to query 16), it is perhaps better in those weavers who are partly agricultural labourers (which is generally the case with a great number of them who are employed in the fields at certain seasons of the year), than with such as confine themselves exclusively to their looms. In reply to query 17, there are many more female weavers in this neighbourhood than formerly. Within the space of three years, since the mill-spun yarn surmounted the prejudice which existed previously against it, the weaving by females commenced, and has gained ground, and, in my opinion, ought to be encouraged. In answer to query 18, such increase, or rather such commencement of the females to the trade of weaving, which they had formerly allowed the males to absorb, together with the fact previously stated, that a linen web can now be woven in less than one half of the time taken to weave it twenty years ago, has naturally and necessarily led to a diminution of the wages of the male weavers. With respect to query 19, there has been, I think, an improvement manifested since the admission of foreign flax at a reduced or nominal duty. And in proceeding to answer query 20, I am inclined to think, it might be desirable to extend the growth and cultivation of flax to the southern counties of Ireland: some of them are undoubtedly better adapted for it than many parts of the northern counties where it has hitherto been attempted, a rich, warm, and at the same time a well-watered soil, being the best for flax. Referring to query 21, I conceive a general improvement on the Irish linen trade, by an increased and permanent demand for linens, to be the means most likely to effect the object in view. Taking next query, 22, there are a few defects in the present Linen Act; bleachers are not now sufficiently protected from thieves and receivers of stolen linen. When it is considered how easily a robbery of several pieces may be effected upon a large bleach field, and supposing the thief, as is too frequently the case, to be one of the workmen employed there, he can cut off the marks of the linen, and leave such marks on the spot; then without fear, as the law now stands, he may keep such linen in a partly bleached state, without cords or marks, in his own house, or dispose of it at an undervalue to persons who buy it, well knowing it to have been stolen. But they may now do so with impunity: it was not always

so;

so; and I would strongly recommend the re-enactment of the provisions contained in the Irish statutes, 21, 22 Geo. 3, c. 35, s. 20 and 21; 17, 18 Geo. 3, c. 21, s. 27 and 28; and 3 Geo. 3, c. 34, s. 43, 44, and 45, to remedy these evils, from a deep sense of the mischief produced by the repeal of these portions of the old Acts which I have pointed out. In answer to query 23, there has been an increase to the linen trade of Ballymena within the last seven years, but nevertheless there has been, generally speaking, a decrease on the linen trade of Ireland during the same period, owing to the unsettled state of South America, the embarrassments in the United States, civil war in Spain and Portugal, and various other causes curtailing or limiting the demand for Irish linen.

I come now to the last query, 24: "Would the linen trade be likely to be extended or improved, or the condition of the weavers, or any other class engaged in it, benefited by new Legislative enactments; and of what character?" The main remedy for the distress of weavers and all other classes in the linen trade, is a general improvement in the demand, which ought most anxiously to be endeavoured for, and is the more necessary from the increased facility with which linens can now be made. A weaver at present can produce twice as many webs of linen in 12 months as he could have done 20 years since: hence our linen merchants require now to find vent for double the quantity of linens then made, or a stagnation of trade is occasioned by over-production. While perhaps little can be done by Acts of Parliament, much might be done by the Executive Government; and here I beg most distinctly not to be misunderstood, as conveying a censure on the present administration, which I doubt not is as ready as any preceding one to attend to the interests of trade and commerce; but these interests are of such vital importance in a trading community, that I do conceive they are worthy of much deeper and more minute consideration than has ever yet been afforded to them. It is surprising to think, when looking at the extent of the colonial possessions of Great Britain, how few of our linens they take from us. Our promising and extensive settlements in the vast continent of Australia hitherto have done nothing for the linen trade. The exports of linen from Great Britain and Ireland to the East Indies, also to Canada and all the British Colonies in North America, are very trifling. To the West Indies, indeed, a considerable quantity of linens are sent; but with judicious management an increased demand might be produced everywhere, not only in our colonies, but at home, and also in the dominions of other Powers. Reductions of existing duties ought to be universally sought for; I mean on linens. I confess I am doubtful that the admission of linen yarn into France, at a low duty, is not beneficial to the hand-loom weavers in this country, nor to the linen trade in general; it keeps up the price of mill-spun yarn here, while it takes away a great portion of the Irish yarn to France to be woven there, and exported from thence to the United States, and other places, to compete with our linens. And any one who looks to the present prices of provisions, and the rate of wages in France, in contrast with Great Britain and Ireland, will see that the English, Scotch, and Irish weavers suffer from an unfair competition. So long as, owing to the existing corn laws, or any other cause, the manufacturing part of the community here is obliged to pay higher prices for food than their continental rivals, so long will that numerous portion of the people suffer privation. I have thus at greater length than I intended, but at the same time with as much brevity as I could use to convey my ideas, answered your queries. I am not vain enough to think my opinions on these matters of much value, but I believed it to be my duty to give them candidly when sought for.

I have, &c.

Wm. Miller.

Dear Sir, Benbual Castle, Blackwatertown, 6 December 1838.

Your's of 26th ultimo, along with some questions relating to the linen trade, for the information of the Hand-loom Inquiry Commissioners, was duly received. I was a member of the Armagh and Tyrone Linen Committees, and I believe my name is still on the list for each county; but since I gave over the linen business (about three years ago), I have not acted on either committee, but shall be glad to give you any information in my power. In the county Armagh there are from 50 to 60 seal-masters who attend the different markets, besides many manufacturers who have taken out seals, solely for sealing their own linens; in fact, anybody making proper application could get a seal in that county. In Tyrone there is only one seal-master for each market, and a manufacturer must employ a certain number of looms excepting his own manufacture. The Tyrone system I consider far preferable; I do not think one-fourth of the linens that go to the Armagh markets are measured or examined by the seal-masters; they put on what the weavers tell them. I think the present system of seal-masters injurious to the trade; in my opinion each buyer should be his own seal-master, instructor, and see before he pays for the linens that there are no frauds, with the exception of that part of the Linen Act relating to the weavers and their employers. I think the trade generally would be better without it. I think the mill-spun yarn will ultimately supersede the hand-spun, but cannot think the weavers' families have suffered much by it; their earnings have been very trifling for some years, now their children from 14 years of age and upwards are weaving, and their mothers and younger children are winding bobbins on. The Act lately passed relating to loan funds will be of infinite service to the weavers in the north of Ireland, in enabling them to get looms, and also the New Poor-law Act, to prevent them begging, and to force them to habits of industry. There are a great many weavers weaving for manufacturers who formerly wove for the markets. The

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alteration has been going on gradually for some years, and, in my opinion, the trade will ultimately get altogether in that way. I should say the weavers are benefited by it, as formerly they used to spend from two to three days every fortnight purchasing yarn and selling their linens. The mill-spun yarn has been a great means of working the change. Now, if a merchant gets an order for a quantity all alike, he can have them all made with the same quantity and quality of yarn: formerly he must go to the markets and purchase as many pieces as he wanted from as many different weavers, besides, there were many parts of the year potato setting, when they were not to be had in the markets. I think the weaver's wages fully as good as the wages of any other labourer in this neighbourhood. The families in general are not comfortable, but confinement with the Irish is not liked. There are more female weavers than formerly; the lighter linens and cottons can be woven faster and fully as well by women as by men. I cannot think the breaking up of the Linen Board has had any effect on the growth of flax, or on the linen trade in any respect. I cannot see what benefit would follow from growing flax in other parts of Ireland, unless the crop was more profitable, or gave more employment, which is not likely to be the case unless spinning mills were erected in this immediate neighbourhood. I should say there is no great change in the quantity of linens manufactured; but taking the province of Ulster altogether, it is increasing. I cannot think the trade would be benefited by any new Legislative enactments, nor the condition of the weavers improved.

I am, &c.

Thomas Eyre.

Answers to the Questions of the Hand-loom Inquiry Commission, by *Alexander Hunter.*

Dunmurry, 10 December 1838.

Query 1. Are you a member of any, and what committee, for appointing seal-masters, inspectors, &c.?

I am not.

2. Can you state the number of seal-masters and inspectors appointed by or acting under your committee; the markets for which they are appointed, and their names, addresses, and other occupations?

I do not know.

3. Do the inspectors make periodical, or any, returns to the committee of the amount of fines they have levied; if so, what are they, and what has been their application?

I cannot say.

4. Are you of opinion that any considerable quantity of hand-spun yarn is sold deficient in count and length?

I think not.

5. Would you recommend any more efficient regulation of the yarn market, and of what kind?

No.

6. Are you of opinion that the substitution of mill-spun for hand-spun yarn, as far as it extends, has been beneficial or otherwise to any and what class of persons engaged in the linen manufacture, and in what manner?

I think mill-spun yarn has been beneficial to all concerned, as but for it the linen trade would have been at a very low ebb before now, it not being possible to have hand-spun in sufficient quantity to meet the demand, and at such a low price as to enable us to compete with other countries.

7. Is it your opinion that the mill-spun yarn will ultimately supersede the hand-spun altogether, or to what extent?

I think nearly altogether.

8. Do you consider there is much embezzlement or theft of linen yarn by weavers or their families, and is it carried on to an extent to affect detrimentally the trade, by lowering the quality of the article produced; or in any other manner?

I think not.

9. Are the present laws sufficient to punish or check this offence, and the purchasing of stolen or embezzled yarn; and if not, what enactment would you substitute?

I think the present laws are sufficient.

10. Do the present laws afford manufacturers adequate facility for the recovery of property entrusted to weavers, in cases of suspected embezzlement, or other dishonesty?

I think they do.

11. What enactment would be advisable on this subject?

None.

12. Has

12. Has the condition of the hand-loom weavers' families been much depressed by the falling off in the quantity and amount of remuneration of yarn spun by them, and to what other occupation have they now recourse as a substitute?

I think they have been depressed, and I think there has been but little employment; instead, latterly, the females have got more employment in needle-work or cotton goods, at very low rates, and in a few districts both boys and girls are employed in weaving lawns and linens of a light fabric.

13. Are there great numbers of weavers, and in what localities, now weaving for manufacturers who formerly wove for the market; under what circumstances has such a change been effected, and at what period; and has it benefited or depressed the condition of the weavers?

There are in every locality, and the change occurred when manufacturers became extensive; and I think the change beneficial to the weavers, as they can now choose between the two systems.

14. Is it your opinion that the entire trade of linen weaving, or what portion of it, will ultimately fall into the hands of master manufacturers?

At present the greatest part is in the hands of manufacturers, and I think will increase.

15. What are the relative advantages and disadvantages of manufacturers giving out materials to be woven for them at a price, and purchasing webs in the public market?

The manufacturers save time and expenses by dealing largely; in that is their great profit.

16. What is the condition, moral and physical, of the hand-loom weavers in your district?

There are very few, and they weave cotton goods, and to me unknown.

17. Are there more or less female weavers in your neighbourhood than formerly; and at what period, and under what circumstances, did such increase or diminution take place?

None in this neighbourhood.

18. Has such increase or diminution had any, and what effect, on the wages of the male weavers?

I know of none.

19. Has the quality of the flax produced in Ireland deteriorated, or improved, since the breaking up of the Linen Board, or from any particular period; and from what causes has the deterioration or improvement arisen?

It has deteriorated, owing to the land being too much cultivated in the districts usually sown with flax-seed and other crops paying better.

20. Would it be desirable to extend the growth and cultivation of flax in Ireland, and in what particular provinces and counties?

I think it would in every county.

21. If desirable, what would be the most likely means of effecting the object?

I think a number of small premiums in uncultivated districts, without regard to quantity, as over-cultivated land is not good for flax.

22. Are there any defects in the present Linen Act which you think it expedient to amend, and what remedies would you propose to adopt?

I think they are sufficient.

23. Are you of opinion that the linen trade of Ireland is an increasing or decreasing trade, and from what circumstances?

I think it much increasing, and caused by mill-spun yarn.

24. Would it be likely to be extended, or improved, or the condition of the weavers, or any other class engaged in it, benefited, by new Legislative enactments, and of what character?

I think not. I think it would be beneficial if the inspector was appointed by, say the assistant-barrister, to whom complaint could be made at quarter-sessions when necessary.

Alex. Hunter.

Answers to Questions by *Joseph M'Kee.*

1. Are you a member of any and what committee, for appointing seal-masters, inspectors, &c.?

I have been a member of the county Armagh Committee for appointing seal-masters and inspectors since its commencement.

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2. Can you state the number of seal-masters and inspectors appointed by or acting under your committee; the markets for which they are appointed, and their names, addresses, and other occupations?

During that time we have appointed about 65 seal-masters, and four inspectors; viz. David Ballantine, linen inspector; Henry Lingalton, David Iamphrys, and Patrick Lynch, yarn inspectors.

3. Do the inspectors make periodical, or any, returns to the committee of the amount of fines they have levied; if so, what are they, and what has been their application?

For some years the inspectors gave in their returns of fines, part of which went to the magistrate's clerk at Armagh; the remainder was very little to remunerate them for their trouble. But the last four years the markets were so small, we got no returns from them.

4. Are you of opinion that any considerable quantity of hand-spun yarn is sold deficient in count and length?

I consider a great deal of hand-spun yarn is deficient in length and count.

5. Would you recommend any more efficient regulation of the yarn market, and of what kind?

I consider a few years will put the hand-spun yarn out of the markets, so that any new regulation would be useless.

6. Are you of opinion that the substitution of mill-spun for hand-spun yarn, as far as it extends, has been beneficial or otherwise to any and what class of persons engaged in the linen manufacture, and in what manner?

I am of opinion that mill-spun yarn is beneficial to all that are extensive in the linen trade.

7. Is it your opinion that the mill-spun yarn will ultimately supersede the hand-spun altogether, or to what extent?

It is my decided opinion that mill-spun yarn will completely supersede all others.

8. Do you consider there is much embezzlement or theft of linen yarn by weavers or their families, and is it carried on to an extent to affect detrimentally the trade, by lowering the quality of the article produced, or in any other manner?

I consider there is a great deal of embezzlement of yarns by weavers, winders, and their families.

9. Are the present laws sufficient to punish or check this offence, and the purchasing of stolen or embezzled yarn; and if not, what enactment would you substitute?

I consider the present law is not sufficient to check the buying and selling of stolen yarns. I would recommend imprisonment at hard labour, instead of the present law, for all persons that would buy or sell stolen yarns, or have such in their possession; it not being the poorer part of the community that deals in these stolen goods, but persons that can well pay the fine when convicted, and then resume their old course next day.

10. Do the present laws afford manufacturers adequate facility for the recovery of property entrusted to weavers, in cases of suspected embezzlement, or other dishonesty?

I think the present law is very well in that respect.

11. What enactment would be advisable on this subject?

The present.

12. Has the condition of the hand-loom weavers' families been much depressed by the falling off in the quantity and amount of remuneration of yarn spun by them, and to what other occupation have they now recourse as a substitute?

I consider the condition of hand-loom weavers is much improved, as to temperance and sobriety, since the introduction of mill-spun yarn. Instead of spending one or two days each week buying their yarn and selling their web, they now can stay at home and get work in either weaving, winding, or warping yarns for themselves and families, and earn more wages in a day than a spinner could do were the flax bestowed to her.

13. Are there great numbers of weavers, and in what localities, now weaving for manufacturers who formerly wove for the market; under what circumstances has such a change been effected, and at what period; and has it benefited or depressed the condition of the weavers?

Nearly all the weavers in the north of Ireland are weaving for manufacturers, and my last answer will do for this.

14. Is it your opinion that the entire trade of linen weaving, or what portion of it, will ultimately fall into the hands of master manufacturers?

I am decidedly of opinion that the entire trade of linen weaving will fall into the hands of manufacturers.

15. What

15. What are the relative advantages and disadvantages of manufacturers giving out materials to be woven for them at a price, and purchasing webs in the public market?

By getting webs manufactured, you get them made of one kind of yarn; it saves the great expense of travelling to different towns, and often paying a large salary to men to attend markets. It is also a great advantage to weavers getting their work from such manufacturers, instead of travelling 10 or 12 miles to sell their webs.

16. What is the condition, moral and physical, of the hand-loom weavers in your district?

The linen weavers are in general the most industrious and happy people of their rank or place in Ireland.

17. Are there more or less female weavers in your neighbourhood than formerly; and at what period, and under what circumstances, did such increase or diminution take place?

There are a great many more female weavers than there were before mill-spun yarn was introduced.

18. Has such increase or diminution had any, and what effect, on the wages of the male weavers?

I think the female weavers have not made any alteration in the wages of male weavers, there being abundance of work for all.

19. Has the quality of the flax produced in Ireland deteriorated, or improved, since the breaking up of the Linen Board, or from any particular period; and from what causes has the deterioration or improvement arisen?

The cultivation of flax is greatly on the increase in this part of the country, owing to the quantity of spinning-mills. The farmers can now sell any quantity they may have of it for ready money, at a more remunerating price than any other crop they could put in the ground, taking five years' average.

20. Would it be desirable to extend the growth and cultivation of flax in Ireland, and in what particular provinces and counties?

It would be advisable to extend the growth of flax over all Ireland, but more particularly in the south, the land being so favourable to it, and the poor being so badly off for work.

21. If desirable, what would be the most likely means of effecting the object?

Let the landed proprietors import good flax-seed for their tenants, give them the seed on credit for eight months, and, when the November gale-day arrives, they will be able to pay for their seed and their rent by the produce of their flax. This has been done in this county with great success. The Earl of Charlemont is a model in this case, and could give good advice on this subject.

22. Are there any defects in the present Linen Act which you think it expedient to amend, and what remedies would you propose to adopt?

I think the present Linen Act is on a very fair principle, with the exception of what I have recommended in No. 9.

23. Are you of opinion that the linen trade of Ireland is an increasing or decreasing trade, and from what circumstances?

I am of opinion the linen trade is much on the increase, owing to our being able to get plenty of better yarns, and at a lower price than the female spinner can make them for.

24. Would it be likely to be extended, or improved, or the condition of the weavers, or any other class engaged in it, benefited, by new Legislative enactments, and of what character?

I do not know of any enactment that could be made to improve the linen law, with the exception of making a more speedy and powerful Act for checking the buying, selling, or embezzling stolen yarn or cloth, and for having such in their possession.

Millview, Keady,
14 December 1838.

Joseph M'Kee.

Sir,

Keady, 15 December 1838.

Annexed you have my answer to your queries, which I hope will be found correct and pleasing. I beg leave to mention my reason for recommending imprisonment, instead of a fine, for buying or selling stolen yarns, or for having such in their possession knowing them to be stolen.

Nearly all the complaints and convictions that I ever knew of, for buying or selling stolen yarn, were against the proprietors of whisky-shops or country grocers; and when they are convicted, the fine is nothing in comparison to what they make by dealing in the stolen goods, and they do not consider it a shame to be fined, when imprisonment, in my opinion, would nearly put a stop to it altogether.

I am, &c.
Joseph M'Kee.

R. M. Muggeridge, Esq.

Linen Manufacture of Ireland.

Report of R M. Muggeridge, Esq.

Sir, Castlewelland, 22 December 1838.

In reply to your letter of 21st November, I beg to submit the answers to the queries contained therein, which I have answered as accurately as in my power, and

Remain, Sir, &c.

Rich. M. Muggeridge, Esq. *James Murland.*
Pro *Chas. Murland.*

Query 1. Are you a member of any, and what committee for appointing seal-masters, inspectors, &c.?

I was a member of a committee for appointing sealmasters.

2. Can you state the number of seal-masters and inspectors appointed by or acting under your committee; the markets for which they are appointed, and their names, addresses, and other occupations?

I cannot state the number of seal-masters there now are, there being no public markets in this neighbourhood, and my having given up purchasing brown linens in any public market, have not taken any interest in the matter.

3. Do the inspectors make periodical, or any, returns to the committee of the amount of fines they have levied; if so, what are they, and what has been their application?

Replied to in my answer to No. 2.

4. Are you of opinion that any considerable quantity of hand-spun yarn is sold deficient in count and length?

There is no doubt that a great proportion of the hand-spun yarn is deficient in count, which has the effect of reducing the article still lower in the nominal prices in comparison with mill-spun yarns, as the buyer has to calculate a deficiency.

5. Would you recommend any more efficient regulation of the yarn market, and of what kind?

I do not think any legal enactment could be passed to encourage hand-spinning to any extent.

6. Are you of opinion that the substitution of mill-spun for hand-spun yarn, as far as it extends, has been beneficial or otherwise to any and what class of persons engaged in the linen manufacture, and in what manner?

There can be no doubt that the introduction of machinery for spinning yarns in this country has had the most beneficial effects on the trade; from 1820 to 1830 the linen trade was decreasing in Ireland, and progressing rapidly in Scotland and in Yorkshire; but for the last few years our trade is progressing, and will, I think, soon have regained its standing.

7. Is it your opinion that the mill-spun yarn will ultimately supersede the hand-spun altogether, or to what extent?

I consider in a short time it will supersede hand-spun altogether.

8. Do you consider there is much embezzlement or theft of linen yarn, by weavers or their families, and is it carried on to an extent to affect detrimentally the trade, by lowering the quality of the article produced; or in any other manner?

I have not a doubt that the manufacturer loses a good deal of the weft yarns entrusted to the weavers, which operates against the honest tradesman; as, in consequence of the embezzlement of weft, manufacturers have to establish lower prices for weaving, as a prudent manufacturer must calculate to have a profit beyond the loss he sustains by these petty thefts.

9. Are the present laws sufficient to punish or check this offence, and the purchasing of stolen or embezzled yarn; and if not, what enactment would you substitute?

It is extremely difficult at the present time to punish the buyers of embezzled yarn, in consequence of the manufacturers not being able to identify their property. I think an Act to oblige persons to account for how boiled yarn came into their possession would be of great use; as, in every place where there are weavers employed, there are persons who will receive, at an under value, odd hanks of yarn, stolen from the manufacturers, and yet these people cannot be punished. At one time there was a law of the same kind to protect bleachers: persons having linen in an unfinished state had to account how it came into their possession, or suffer a penalty.

10. Do the present laws afford manufacturers adequate facility for the recovery of property entrusted to weavers, in cases of suspected embezzlement, or other dishonesty?

The existing laws are, I consider, sufficient, with the exception of the difficulty of proving the selling of the weft yarn, from the utter impossibility in any case of identifying it as your property, as stated in No. 9.

11. What enactment would be advisable on this subject?

Replied to in No. 9.

12. Has

12. Has the condition of the hand-loom weavers' families been much depressed by the falling off in the quantity and amount of remuneration of yarn spun by them, and to what other occupation have they now recourse as a substitute?

In neighbourhoods where there are no factories where females are employed, the want of remuneration for hand-spinning is most seriously felt in the families of the weavers; the female branches in the county Down are mostly employed for sewing on muslin for Scotch houses, or in winding yarn for warps for the large manufacturers, and latterly a great many women are learning to weave.

13. Are there great numbers of weavers, and in what localities, now weaving for manufacturers who formerly wove for the market; under what circumstances has such a change been effected, and at what period; and has it benefited or depressed the condition of the weavers?

In every part of the county Down the great bulk of the weavers are employed for large manufacturers; the change has been gradually progressing since 1825, from the general introduction of mill-spun yarns in 1829. The weavers working on their own account have been decreasing very fast, in consequence of their not being able to purchase to any advantage the small quantities of mill-spun yarn they required, and the bleachers giving more money to the large manufacturers for their linens, as they could from them get, when they wanted, any quantity of the kinds of linens they required of pretty nearly the same texture, which, in the public markets, from weavers, it was impossible to do. Whether this has benefited the weavers or not, I am not prepared to say. That the weavers are not so well off as they were some years ago, there cannot be a doubt; but the depression in the trade has caused these changes, not the changes the depression.

14. Is it your opinion that the entire trade of linen weaving, or what portion of it, will ultimately fall into the hands of master manufacturers?

That the entire trade will be in the hands of large manufacturers, there cannot be a doubt.

15. What are the relative advantages and disadvantages of manufacturers giving out materials to be woven for them at a price, and purchasing webs in the public market?

In my reply to No. 13, I have given all the information I can on this subject.

16. What is the condition, moral and physical, of the hand-loom weavers in your district?

The linen weavers, from not being congregated in large towns, their moral condition is and always has been greatly superior to any other class of operatives. Their physical condition is at the present pretty fair, as there is plenty of employment at pretty fair wages; but, at the high price of provisions, if the demand for linens was not good, the condition of the hand-loom weaver would be wretched.

17. Are there more or less female weavers in your neighbourhood than formerly; and at what period, and under what circumstances, did such increase or such diminution take place?

There are more female weavers every year, the reason I have stated in my reply to your 12th query.

18. Has such increase or diminution had any, and what effect, on the wages of the male weavers?

The number of female weavers is yet too small to have any effect on the male weavers in the linen trade; how it may operate in the cotton trade, in which there are many more female weavers employed, I cannot say, as there is no cotton-weaving in my neighbourhood.

19. Has the quality of the flax produced in Ireland deteriorated, or improved, since the breaking up of the Linen Board, or from any particular period; and from what causes has the deterioration or improvement arisen?

More flax is grown, and it is better prepared, in Ireland, since the breaking up of the Linen Board; but the increase has no reference to that circumstance. Formerly, the difficulty of selling flax in large quantities prevented the large farmers from turning their attention to the cultivation of this crop; but, for the last few years, the erection of so many spinning-mills has caused a steady demand; which the farmer finding that he can now sell any quantity, makes him sow with flax any land he conceives best adapted for the crop.

20. Would it be desirable to extend the growth and cultivation of flax in Ireland, and in what particular provinces and counties?

As to whether it would be better for the country, whether more flax were grown or not, I am not prepared to say; the more flax is grown the cheaper it will be, and the cheaper the raw material the better is it for all concerned in the trade. But, so long as the present corn laws exist, the increase of flax growing will not be very great, as it is the only crop with which they have to compete with our continental neighbours.

21. If desirable, what would be the most likely means of effecting the object?

Replied to in No. 20.

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22. Are there any defects in the present Linen Act which you think it expedient to amend, and what remedies would you propose to adopt?

I do not think any amendment in the Act necessary, with the exception of that pointed out in reply to query 9.

23. Are you of opinion that the linen trade of Ireland is an increasing or decreasing trade, and from what circumstances?

There is not a doubt that the linen trade is increasing; the cause I have pointed out in my reply to query 6.

24. Would it be likely to be extended, or improved, or the condition of the weavers, or any other class engaged in it, benefited, by new Legislative enactments, and of what character?

I cannot foresee how any legislative enactment can benefit the condition of the weavers; I mean any Act for the regulation of their trade. The only hope of amendment the hand-loom weaver has, is a repeal of the corn laws, when he hopes to get his food at a price equivalent to the wages received for his labour.

Sir, Dunminning, Ballymena, 18 December 1838.

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge your communication of the 10th instant, to which I shall endeavour to give the best answers in my power. I am not now engaged in the linen trade, but my experience, as having been so for many years, and a member of the Linen Committee, besides being the magistrate before whom complaints of the frauds committed by the weavers, sealmasters, &c. in this district are generally brought, enables me to speak with some confidence on the subject.

I may add, that the linen market of this town is the only one in Ireland which has not considerably fallen off, some of them altogether ceased, within the last few years; whereas the market of Ballymena has very much increased; the cause of which change, I think, is principally attributable to the fact, that, in all other parts of Ulster, the trade is much more in the hands of manufacturers than it is here: those manufacturers having large stocks sell to the bleachers on credit, and the goods, being sold in large lots, are not exposed in the open market; whereas, here, the trade, though to a great extent in the hands of manufacturers also, is carried on principally for cash bargains.

I have, &c.

Rich. M. Muggeridge, Esq. *Tho. M. Birnie.*

Query 1. ARE you a member of any, and what committee, for appointing sealmasters, inspectors, &c.?

I AM a member of the Linen Committee of the county of Antrim.

2. Can you state the number of seal-masters and inspectors appointed by or acting under your committee; the markets for which they are appointed, and their names, addresses, and other occupations?

The records of the committee being kept in Belfast, I cannot state the exact number of sealmasters in the county; there are, however, two appointed to particular markets: Mr. James Orr Leahy for the markets of Ballymoney and Dervoch, and Mr. Hudson Hogg, those of Ballymena and Portglenone.

There are two inspectors: Mr. O'Flaherty, for Belfast and Lisburn; Mr. William Hogg, for Ballymena, Ballymoney, Portglenone and Dervoch. O'Flaherty lives in Lisburn, Hogg in Portglenone.

3. Do the inspectors make periodical, or any, returns to the committee of the amount of fines they have levied; if so, what are they, and what has been their application?

I cannot say what is done as to the fines levied in Belfast and Lisburn. Mr. Hogg makes an annual return to me of those in the other markets, the amount of which is paid to himself, and out of it he pays his assistants, &c.

4. Are you of opinion that any considerable quantity of hand-spun yarn is sold deficient in count and length?

There is very little hand-spun yarn deficient in count, &c., considering the quantity sold in the county.

5. Would you recommend any more efficient regulation of the yarn market, and of what kind?

No.

6. Are you of opinion that the substitution of mill-spun for hand-spun yarn, as far as it extends, has been beneficial or otherwise to any and what class of persons engaged in the linen manufacture, and in what manner?

I think the substitution of mill-spun for hand-spun yarn has been beneficial to all persons engaged in the trade; to the weavers, as it is much more easily woven, and to others, as it has much increased the quantity produced, thereby increasing the trade to an extent it never could have reached by hand-spun yarn.

7. Is

7. Is it your opinion that the mill-spun yarn will ultimately supersede the hand-spun altogether, or to what extent?

Altogether.

8. Do you consider there is much embezzlement or theft of linen yarn, by weavers or their families, and is it carried on to an extent to affect detrimentally the trade, by lowering the quality of the article produced; or in any other manner?

I think there is not much embezzlement of yarn, considering the quantity, and speaking from my experience of the complaints brought before me of that offence; but yarn may be stolen to a small extent from each piece, without being detected by the manufacturers.

9. Are the present laws sufficient to punish or check this offence, and the purchasing of stolen or embezzled yarn; and if not, what enactment would you substitute?

9.—Yes.

10. Do the present laws afford manufacturers adequate facility for the recovery of property entrusted to weavers, in cases of suspected embezzlement, or other dishonesty?

10.—Yes.

11. What enactment would be advisable on this subject?

11.—None.

12. Has the condition of the hand-loom weavers' families been much depressed by the falling off in the quantity and amount of remuneration of yarn spun by them, and to what other occupation have they now recourse as a substitute?

I do not think the condition of the weavers' families has been depressed, as most of the girls are now employed in weaving unions and light linens.

13. Are there great numbers of weavers, and in what localities, now weaving for manufacturers who formerly wove for the market; under what circumstances has such a change been effected, and at what period: and has it benefited or depressed the condition of the weavers?

There are many weavers now working for manufacturers who formerly wove for the market. The change has been gradually going on for a long time; I think it has been advantageous to the weavers.

14. Is it your opinion that the entire trade of linen weaving, or what portion of it, will ultimately fall into the hands of master manufacturers?

Yes.

15. What are the relative advantages and disadvantages of manufacturers giving out materials to be woven for them at a price, and purchasing webs in the public market?

The advantage of manufacturers appears to me that one person does the work of many weavers, buying the yarn and selling the cloth which would otherwise occupy 50 or 60 persons, probably many more.

16. What is the condition, moral and physical, of the hand-loom weavers in your district?

At present they are pretty comfortable, wages being high. They are, in general, quiet, well-conducted people.

17. Are there more or less female weavers in your neighbourhood than formerly; and at what period, and under what circumstances, did such increase or diminution take place?

Female weavers have much increased in number since the introduction of the trade in unions, and latterly by the falling off in the demand for hand-spun yarn.

18. Has such increase or diminution had any, and what effect, on the wages of the male weavers?

The fluctuations in the wages of weavers are, I think, more dependent on the demand for cloth, than on the increase of the number of weavers.

19. Has the quality of the flax produced in Ireland deteriorated, or improved, since the breaking up of the Linen Board, or from any particular period; and from what causes has the deterioration or improvement arisen?

There is very little flax raised in this district. I do not think the quality has latterly either improved or deteriorated.

20. Would it be desirable to extend the growth and cultivation of flax in Ireland, and in what particular provinces and counties?

Of course it would be desirable to extend the cultivation of flax in Ireland generally; but as the farms in this neighbourhood are generally very small, and flax is a very exhausting crop, I think it questionable whether it would be desirable here.

21. If desirable, what would be the most likely means of effecting the object?

(*Not answered.*)

22. Are there any defects in the present Linen Act which you think it expedient to amend, and what remedies would you propose to adopt?

No.

23. Are you of opinion that the linen trade of Ireland is an increasing or decreasing trade, and from what circumstances?

Increasing.

24. Would it be likely to be extended, or improved, or the condition of the weavers, or any other class engaged in it, benefited, by new Legislative enactments, and of what character?

No.

In explanation of my answer to No. 2, the right of sealing in the markets of Dervoch and Ballymoney is confined entirely to Mr. Leahy. Many large manufacturers are allowed to seal for Ballymoney and Portglenone; all of good character, who employ more than 20 looms, are allowed seals, on application to the committee.

18 December 1838. *Tho. M. Birnie.*

Sir, Spamount, Castlederg, 26 December 1838.

I AM favoured with your letter of 21st ultimo, covering a series of queries respecting the linen trade of Ireland. I have given, in the following pages, each query such answer as occurred to me the question required. Though conscious of my inability to throw any useful light on the subject, I yet believed it my duty to give my thoughts in detail (perhaps too much detail).

I have, &c.

To Richard M. Muggeridge, Esq., *Edward Sproul.*
Assistant Commissioner, Hand-loom Inquiry, Manchester.

Replies to Mr. Muggeridge's Queries.

Query 1. Are you a member of any and what committee, for appointing seal-mastars, inspectors, &c.?

I am a member of the Linen Committee for the county of Tyrone; this committee, to suit the interests and convenience of the trade in this extensive county, has been split into two sub-committees, who act independently of each other; one for the eastern, the other for the western portion of the county. I belong to the western committee, who have under their care the trade connected with the linen markets of Strabane, Newtonstewart, Omagh, and Tintora, and the yarn markets of the same towns, with that of all the fairs and weekly markets in the smaller towns in the western part of Tyrone; yarn being sold in all fairs and markets throughout the county.

2. Can you state the number of seal-masters and inspectors appointed by or acting under your committee; the markets for which they are appointed, and their names, addresses, and other occupations?

There is one inspector, Robert Campbell, of Gortin, Newtonstewart, for the linen markets within our bounds; he is also yarn inspector, and has a deputy yarn inspector. This office is not discharged in an efficient manner; having no salary, the office of inspector is not sought for by the same respectable and influential persons that offered under the late Linen Board. In this department I think very important benefits would have been conferred upon the trade had the salaries to county inspectors been continued as under the Linen Board, placing them under the superintendence of the Linen Committees, and making their tenure of office depend upon their activity, usefulness, and good conduct. As to sealmasters, we have, upon principle, only appointed one or two to each market; the linen seals being held by respectable persons, who have a profitable interest in the office, are discharged in a very efficient manner; and being responsible for all defects in the goods sealed, for all frauds and deficiency, the sealmaster affords to the purchaser ample security against any losses sustained by deficiencies or frauds in the goods bought at market. The sealmasters in our district are William Gwynne, bank agent, and John Barclay, merchant, both of Strabane, for the market of Strabane; Mrs. Boyce, of Newtonstewart, has been continued in the office held by her late husband, Samuel Boyce, for Newtonstewart; James Greer, merchant, and John Buchanan, county distributor of stamps, both of Omagh, for Omagh market; and for Tintora, Charles King, of Tintora, merchant. The duties of this important office in all those places are discharged in a very efficient manner, perhaps more so than under the Linen Board.

This department requires no alteration.

3. Do the inspectors make periodical, or any, returns to the committee of the amount of fines they have levied; if so, what are they, and what has been their application?

The inspector makes a periodical return of all fines levied to the committee; the amount of those fines, however, falling short of even a moderate compensation for his services, are handed over to him. Yarn inspector (deputy appointed by the linen inspector) makes

makes no return of fines. The fines levied are chiefly upon seal-masters for deficient length or breadth; having the seals to recur to, few fines are levied off weavers; and as no linens can be offered for sale in the market unsealed, the purchaser is well secured against fraud by the respectable and responsible parties he can recur to.

4. Are you of opinion that any considerable quantity of hand-spun yarn is sold deficient in count and length?

Frauds to a considerable extent prevail in the length and count of yarn, especially in the yarn sold in fairs and market towns in remote districts; and these fraudulent practices do much to bring hand-spun yarn into disrepute, and, by lowering its value, have a powerful tendency to hasten the period of its being altogether superseded by the yarn produced by machinery.

5. Would you recommend any more efficient regulation of the yarn market, and of what kind?

Perhaps the scattered and remote situation of the yarn markets presents difficulties almost insuperable to its due regulation, and by the nature of the article precluding its previous examination before sale by responsible persons, like the brown linen seal-masters, the difficulty is increased; still I think much might be done by the appointment of an active yarn inspector, and giving him a claim upon the next magistrate for co-operation in striking fines in a summary manner against the sellers of fraudulent yarn. Those inspectors might either be appointed by the county inspector, and report to the linen committees, or they might, if a small salary was given, be in the appointment of the committee directly.

6. Are you of opinion that the substitution of mill-spun for hand-spun yarn, as far as it extends, has been beneficial or otherwise to any and what class of persons engaged in the linen manufacture, and in what manner?

Being myself a bleacher almost wholly of hand-spun linen, I cannot speak from experience of the benefits or disadvantages resulting from the introduction of machinery in spinning yarn, as to its general effect upon the trade; but I cannot be blind to the great injury it has done to the country population. Before its introduction the female peasantry of Ulster, from the wives and daughters of respectable farmers, to the families of the poorest cottagers, from the earliest to the most advanced age, all were busy, all were happy, and habits of industry, formed at the earliest age, continued through life. The reverse of all this, if it has not yet wholly overtaken them, is fast approaching. The lessened demand for their yarn has diminished the remuneration for the spinner's labour so far that nothing but decided habits of industry, previously formed, keeps the females of middle and advanced age to the spinning-wheel, whilst the girls are unemployed, and untaught to spin or seek occupation in field labour, where they are not wanted, male labourers being sufficiently numerous.

7. Is it your opinion that the mill-spun yarn will ultimately supersede the hand-spun altogether, or to what extent?

Mill-spun yarn, it appears, will supersede hand-spun altogether. Although all the public markets within our district are yet supplied with linens from hand-spun yarn; yet, from the causes already detailed, it is most probable that hand-spun yarn will gradually be displaced by mill-spun: when the present race of spinners are gone, and few of the rising generation taught to replace them, mill-spun will supply the place of hand-spun yarn.

8, 9, 10, 11. Do you consider there is much embezzlement or theft of linen yarn by weavers or their families, and is it carried on to an extent to affect detrimentally the trade, by lowering the quality of the article produced; or in any other manner?—Are the present laws sufficient laws to punish or check this offence, and the purchasing of stolen or embezzled yarn; and if not, what enactment would you substitute?—Do the present laws afford manufacturers adequate facility for the recovery of property entrusted to weavers, in cases of suspected embezzlement, or other dishonesty?—What enactment would be advisable on this subject?

Not being a manufacturer, and residing in a neighbourhood where master manufacturers are little known, I cannot from experience speak on these heads.

12. Has the condition of the hand-loom weavers' families been much depressed by the falling off in the quantity and amount of remuneration of yarn spun by them, and to what other occupation have they now recourse as a substitute?

On this head I may refer you to my reply to Query 6, where the condition of the peasantry is considered as generally depressed by the falling off of hand-spinning. In this particular hand-loom weavers or their families are no more depressed than their neighbours of the same class in society pursuing other callings; the female portion of each family had been employed at the spinning-wheel; the depression is general, and no suitable employment has yet been discovered for them. Formerly female labour in spinning was so productive as to aid the males of the family very efficiently in providing for the support and comfort of their families; now the burthen falls chiefly on the men, the wages for spinning being almost nothing.

13. Are there great numbers of weavers, and in what localities, now weaving for manufacturers, who formerly wove for the market; under what circumstances has such

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such a change been effected, and at what period; and has it benefited or depressed the condition of the weavers?

There has been established at Strabane a manufactory where a portion of the weavers formerly employed in weaving for the market have been employed; it has existed for a few years. I am not aware that it has either benefited or depressed the weaver; the prevalence of weaving for the market serves as a check to prevent the manufacturers' rate of wages from falling below the level of the market-rate of profit. Messrs. O'Bryan, Gwynne & Co. are the present proprietors of this manufactory, which is carried on to a moderate extent. Though not in Tyrone, it is proper to advert to another small, but well-conducted manufactory, established by Mr. M'Connell, at Raphoe (county Donegal), who employs weavers formerly employed in weaving for Strabane market. I know of no other manufactory for weaving linens in our bounds.

14. Is it your opinion that the entire trade of linen weaving, or what portion of it, will ultimately fall into the hands of master manufacturers?

I think the duration of the trade in weaving for the open brown linen markets will be influenced greatly by the state of the hand-spun linen market. If the latter is extended and improved, so that weavers could get good hand-spun yarn in sufficient quantity, then I am convinced they would prefer weaving for the market, and our markets would continue to be supplied with linens from hand-spun yarn. If, on the other hand, the pressure on the spinner continues so as to cause hand-spun yarn to disappear from our markets, then weaving for the market, and our linen markets themselves, must disappear, and all the trade be thenceforward carried on by master manufacturers.

15. What are the relative advantages and disadvantages of manufacturers giving out materials to be woven for them at a price, and purchasing webs in the public market?

Manufacturers chiefly using yarn from the mill, and weavers for the market wholly that from hand-spinning, the relative advantage of one over the other rests with the outlet a bleacher may have; one having connexion that require from him linens from hand-spun, another from that produced from mill-spun yarn. The woven fabric is so different in appearance and character that the one is never mistaken for the other, so that an equal demand sufficed for each, which is, I believe, the case, with some fluctuations; then the advantages are equal; but mill-spun yarn not abounding in this neighbourhood, I should leave this question to be answered by others of more experience in that article.

16. What is the condition, moral and physical, of the hand-loom weavers in your district?

The hand-loom weaver, in point of wages, stands very slightly distinguished from the agricultural labourer; their mode of living is also very much the same; in some respects they are better off. If not indolent, they never want employment; if unable to provide yarn to weave for the market on their own account, they can have recourse to the master manufacturers. They also frequently drop the loom at intervals to pursue other avocations, and always cultivate their own potato crop, provide turf, &c.; in general the linen-weavers are an honest and industrious class of men.

17, 18. Are there more or less female weavers in your neighbourhood than formerly; and at what period, and under what circumstances, did such increase or diminution take place?—Has such increase or diminution had any and what effect, on the wages of the male weavers?

Female weavers are not much known here.

19. Has the quality of the flax produced in Ireland deteriorated, or improved, since the breaking up of the Linen Board, or from any particular period; and from what causes has the deterioration or improvement arisen?

The flax crops and quality of the flax have deteriorated since my early recollections, but not from any influence which the existence or dissolution of the Linen Board might have; the cause lies deeper, and may perhaps be found in the change of tillage in Ulster. Lands lying long lay when broken up by the plough were peculiarly well adapted for bearing sure crops of flax of the best quality. The great extension of the cultivation of grain for export of late years has brought so great a proportion of the arable ground under the plough that old lays may now be said not to exist; still if lime was used properly by the flax farmer as a manure, I doubt not but good flax may still be raised.

20. Would it be desirable to extend the growth and cultivation of flax in Ireland, and in what particular provinces and counties?

Flax, if good, generally pays the farmer well; if indifferent, very badly. The great demand now created for the consumption of mills should render it important to extend the culture of flax; part of the county Donegal is peculiarly adapted for growing flax.

21. If desirable, what would be the most likely means of effecting the object?

The most likely means to extend the cultivation of flax would, I think, be found in establishing some system in the markets for the sale of flax; first, as to hours, rules, &c., but chiefly some means of improving its character and quality by an efficient inspection. The character of Irish flax suffers greatly from imperfect cleaning. I should suppose merchants engaged in the purchase and export of this article could suggest some regulations adapted

adapted to improve its quality; there is little doubt if the quality and character could be raised by a rigorous inspection, under penalties to be enacted for irregular or fraudulent practices, a very extended trade in flax might be the result.

22. Are there any defects in the present Linen Act which you think it expedient to amend, and what remedies would you propose to adopt?

The Linen Act is defective in its containing no provision for preventing the practice of buying linens in the market towns before the hour of the market, which practice is carried on to a great extent in all our markets by a class of men we call jobbers, to the manifest injury of both bleacher and weaver. These men go about the entrances to the sealing-rooms, to the bridges and other avenues leading to the market town, and buy all they can from the weavers; afterwards sell them in the public market when the hour arrives. The Act should enact penalties for this offence, which is more injurious than any person not conversant in our trade can conceive. It has not given sufficient power to the committee to fix and enforce attention to the proper hour of commencing the linen markets, where linens of various breadths or descriptions are sold; one should be sold previous to the other description being offered. Now such an arrangement may be entered upon by the buyers themselves; but then it must be unanimous, for one individual may break through the arrangement, and commence at the hours named in the Linen Act, which he has a legal right to do, but very injurious to the general convenience, and to the interest of all parties concerned in the trade of that particular market. It might be very much improved by additional enactments, which I shall detail when I come to Query 24.

23. Are you of opinion that the linen trade of Ireland is an increasing or decreasing trade, and from what circumstances?

The Linen trade of Ulster is not so extensive as it was 20 years ago; at least not so in country districts. How far the apparent diminution may be compensated for in the increased quantities produced at the large manufactories of Armagh, Down, and Antrim, I have no means of discovering; the custom-house returns, perhaps, would furnish ground for forming an opinion; but this, perhaps, might be an uncertain source of information, as linens pass free of customs, they may not be accurately taken an account of at the custom-house.

24. Would it be likely to be extended, or improved, or the condition of the weavers, or any other class engaged in it, benefited, by new legislative enactments, and of what character?

My ideas on this query, as far as defects in the Act, are detailed in my replies to 5 and 22; the defects are not numerous. I will here state in recapitulation what I conceive they are, and what I propose:

1st. The appointment of county inspectors at the same salaries as under the Linen Board (those offices under the board were the only serviceable part of their establishment, and should have been continued), to be aided by a few deputies, appointed either by the inspectors or by the committee, and have their duties extended to all the yarn markets within the range of each committee's district, under such additional provisions as persons conversant with the yarn trade might recommend as useful.

2d. A few trifling alterations in the Act as to the proper hours for the commencement of the market for each variety of the article offered for sale at the public markets for linens.

3d. Strict penalties for anticipating those hours, and a summary jurisdiction granted to the nearest magistrate for enforcing the penalties in this branch; the interference of jobbers in buying and selling linens on the same day to be rigorously forbid and punished. Such being the deficiencies of the Linen Act, the additions that would tend to improve the condition of weavers and others, and the trade generally, are of great importance, and would require great practical skill to discover and apply. It seems to me that a due regulation of the linen and yarn markets might be attained by the appointment of inspectors, providing for a proper superintendence of those officials, by placing them under the County Linen Committee, where these act, or under the magistrates at most petty sessions for the district, if the county committee does not act (which I reluctantly admit is the case in some districts, though not ours); the production of honest yarn, and its sale, is necessary for the very existence of the public linen markets; and I know of no other means for reforming and improving them, except as follows:—

Although premiums are gone out of fashion, and it is doubtful whether premiums to any general extent would be properly distributed, yet wherever individual landed proprietors have turned their attention to the improvement of the condition of their tenantry, premiums have been found of the greatest service in stimulating to the production of superior linen, and superior yarn. It is observed, that the influence extends almost to all the parties coming to that market, not at all confined to the immediate competitors; though difficult to arrange the distribution without abuse, yet the committee, if empowered by law, could correspond with respectable parties near each yarn or linen market (if in remote districts), and, under regulation, furnish funds, to be given as premiums, for the best yarn or best web. Say, in large markets, three premiums of 5*s.*, 3*s.* 4*d.* and 1*s.* 8*d.*; for first, second, and third quality; or in smaller markets, 3*s.* 4*d.*, and 1*s.* 8*d.*, for first and second, to be adjudged by the opinion of two of the largest purchasers in that day's market. The committee to select the parties to intrust from those of the respectable class, who would enter most heartily into the work of benefiting and improving their poorer neighbours. In the larger

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markets, frequented by the members of the committee personally, they could themselves attend to and distribute the premiums. All this may not be very practicable; but if practicable, its tendency to improve and increase the markets would be very great.

With respect to the improvement and extension of the growth of flax, as stated in 20th query, legislative enactments for the regulation of the markets, appointment of inspectors, and enforcement of proper attention to due cleaning and preparing the article, I think extremely needful. The flax is at present brought to market in a disorderly manner; but for regulations on this head I would refer to the opinions of men conversant and engaged in the trade, which I am not.

Edward Sproul.

Magherafelt, 28 Dec. 1838.

Sir,

Your letter of the 21st ult., dated from Manchester, came regularly to hand, and I have now to apologise for not replying to it sooner, being obliged to leave home for some time the day after I received your favour. The depressed state of the hand-loom weavers is a subject well worth inquiry; but their situation and wages depend so much on the state of trade and the demand for linen, that I, with my limited means of knowledge, can see but little that can be done for them by any legislative enactment, without encroaching on some other interest. Annexed you will find answers to the questions you proposed, but I fear all the information I can give will be of little advantage.

I have, &c.

John Walker.

Query 1. Are you a member of any, and what committee, for appointing seal-masters, inspectors, &c.?

1.—I am not a member of any committee for appointing seal-masters or inspectors; nor is there any member of such for this county resides nearer this town than 15 to 20 miles.

2. Can you state the number of seal-masters and inspectors appointed by or acting under your committee; the markets for which they are appointed, and their names, addresses, and other occupations?

Some of the members of the linen committee, with whom you are in communication, are better qualified to answer this question, as it concerns their own officers.

3. Do the inspectors make periodical, or any, returns to the committee of the amount of fines they have levied; if so, what are they, and what has been their application?

This question will likewise be better answered by a member of the linen committee.

4. Are you of opinion that any considerable quantity of hand-spun yarn is sold deficient in count and length?

I am of opinion a very considerable quantity of hand-spun yarn is sold deficient in count and length.

5. Would you recommend any more efficient regulation of the yarn market, and of what kind?

If a proper person could be got to take the office of inspector, who would attend to the duties of that situation, and have a number of deputies under his control, who would attend the yarn markets and inspect the yarn with care, it would be of great use to prevent frauds; but it is now scarcely to be expected that a person of respectability would accept of that office, as there is (since the breaking up of the linen board) no salary attached to it; and if even all the fines were given to that officer, it would only be a trifling remuneration. The persons who are now generally employed in that office are of no use whatever, as they frequently enter into collusion with the sellers, and take bribes.

6. Are you of opinion that the substitution of mill-spun for hand-spun yarn, as far as it extends, has been beneficial or otherwise to any and what class of persons engaged in the linen manufacture, and in what manner?

If the spinning of linen yarn by machinery had not been found out in this or any other country, I am of opinion the people employed in that manufacture would have been as well off generally; and with respect to the spinners of hand-spun yarn, whose support depended on it, they have been rendered destitute by the introduction of mill-spun yarn.

7. Is it your opiniou that the mill-spun yarn will ultimately supersede the hand-spun altogether, or to what extent?

I am of opinion that mill-spun yarn will ultimately supersede the use of hand-spun altogether. It is found so much more easily wove, that weavers, when once accustomed to it, can scarcely be prevailed on to weave hand-spun warps afterwards.

8. Do you consider there is much embezzlement or theft of linen yarn, by weavers or their families, and is it carried on to an extent to affect detrimentally the trade, by lowering the quality of the article produced; or in any other manner?

I do consider there is a great deal of embezzlement of linen yarn by weavers and their families, but I do not think it has the effect of injuring the trade by lowering the quantity of the article produced. The linen is generally wove agreeable to directions; but the weaver impeses by giving in a greater quantity of yarn than is necessary.

9. Are

9. Are the present laws sufficient to punish or check this offence, and the purchasing of stolen or embezzled yarn; and if not, what enactment would you substitute?

The present laws are by no means sufficient to put a stop to the embezzlement of yarn by weavers; there is such a difficulty in proving the property, that it is next to impossible to convict, and it is equally so to convict the persons who purchase from them, from the same reason; and of the two, I think the person buying are most blameable, as they cannot plead necessity, although I cannot think of any enactment that would be likely to be effectual, but such as would encroach on the liberty of trade.

10. Do the present laws afford manufacturers adequate facility for the recovery of property entrusted to weavers, in cases of suspected embezzlement, or other dishonesty?

The present laws are not sufficient for the recovery of property intrusted to dishonest weavers who are suspected of embezzlement; nor do I know any enactment that would, the difficulty of proving the property and conviction is so great; indeed the employer can have very little hold on that class of people, they are in general so poor, but from the fear of losing the employment.

11. What enactment would be advisable on this subject?

I cannot think of any enactment that would be advisable; any stronger laws on this subject might lead to great oppression where the employer was harsh and unfeeling.

12. Has the condition of the hand-loom weavers' families been much depressed by the falling off in the quantity and amount of remuneration of yarn spun by them, and to what other occupation have they now recourse as a substitute?

It is my opinion that the female part of the families of hand-loom weavers have been rendered nearly destitute by the substitution of mill-spun for hand-spun yarn, and though a few persons convenient to large towns may find employment, in the country there is no substitute, nor do I see a likelihood of any natural employment arising to take in the females of the low class of the entire population.

13. Are there great numbers of weavers, and in what localities, now weaving for manufacturers, who formerly wove for the market; under what circumstances has such a change been effected, and at what period; and has it benefited or depressed the condition of the weavers?

There are a great many weavers in the counties Antrim, Down, Armagh, and Derry, who formerly wove for the market, that are now employed by manufacturers. Some 10 or 15 years back, when it was a new trade in this neighbourhood, weavers who purchased their own yarn, and wove their own web, considered it rather a disgrace to take work from a manufacturer; but by degrees, some from poverty not finding it convenient to purchase their own yarn, and others were induced from other causes, and when once the trial was made, they found it so convenient to have everything prepared for them, without either marketing or capital, that their prejudices were gradually removed. Where a weaver can find regular employment, and fair wages, which he generally can do, I am of opinion he is better with such employment. Weaving his own web is more of a speculation; he very often calculates on a price for it which cannot be realised, and perhaps he has expended depending on such calculation, whereas a regular finish price gives no room for any speculation. It likewise does away with the necessity of his attending markets, which seldom fails to lead to expense, and always loss of time.

14. Is it your opinion that the entire trade of linen weaving, or what portion of it, will ultimately fall into the hands of master manufacturers?

It is my opinion that the entire or principal part of linen weaving will ultimately fall into the hands of master manufacturers, who, I think, in time, will likely be the spinners of the yarn.

15. What are the relative advantages and disadvantages of manufacturers giving out materials to be woven for them at a price, and purchasing webs in the public market?

One of the advantages of manufacturing linens is that he can have them made in any way which he may think most suitable, any breadth, length, or thickness; and there will be a great saving in time, as much as would nearly remunerate a manufacturer. For example, if (say) 600 persons wove each their own web, purchased their yarn, and sold their web, it would take at least three or four days from each person, not including expenses at the different markets; whereas one master manufacturer could have 600 weavers attended, and the same quantity of goods wove and disposed of, and save not less than 1,500 days for the weaving of 600 webs. There is, however, one great grievance in that trade, a person cannot get out of it without great loss; your property is in the hands of very poor persons who, when you cease to give them employment, you have scarcely any further control over; whereas, when purchasing linen in the markets, you can leave off at any time without inconvenience or loss.

16. What is the condition, moral and physical, of the hand loom weavers in your district?

The manner in which hand-loom weaving is carried on in this district is, in my opinion, much more favourable to health and morals than being shut up in factories. The weavers

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are divided into three classes; 1st, small farmers' sons, who live and work in their fathers' houses; 2d, married persons, who occupy houses as cottiers, with a garden for potatoes; 3d, unmarried men, who contract with small farmers for their victuals, loom, and attendance. All these classes of persons assist at field labour at certain seasons of the year, which though unfavourable to their employer, is very conducive to health, and perhaps to a certain extent is necessary; but this prevents that regularity in the return of work which can be had where weavers are employed in factories. But, on the other hand, those in factories, when employment ceases from want of demand, or otherwise, are left completely destitute, whereas those in the country are not so much so, as they can generally find some other employment for a time with their connexions or relatives, who hold small parcels of land, and who provide them with food.

17. Are there more or less female weavers in your neighbourhood than formerly; and at what period, and under what circumstances, did such increase or diminution take place?

I should think there are not more, but perhaps rather less female weavers than formerly. The weaving of calico was well adapted for females, being light work, and at one time was profitable; but the introduction of power-looms, and latterly the low price of the article when wove, has reduced the wages so low, that employment in that way is barely worth accepting.

18. Has such increase or diminution had any, and what, effect, on the wages of the male weavers?

I think there are so few female weavers employed in weaving linen, that it has had very little effect on the wages of male weavers.

19. Has the quality of the flax produced in Ireland deteriorated, or improved, since the breaking up of the Linen Board, or from any particular period; and from what causes has the deterioration or improvement arisen?

The quality of Irish flax has improved in many districts since the breaking up of the Linen Board, and is still likely to improve; farmers have now, since the introduction of mill-spun yarn, a ready and profitable market for any quantity of flax. Previous to the introduction of machinery it was retailed in small quantities, and often difficult to find purchasers.

20. Would it be desirable to extend the growth and cultivation of flax in Ireland, and in what particular provinces and counties?

It is my opinion it would be desirable to extend the growth of flax in Ireland in all its provinces; and if the quality of the flax were brought to that perfection it might be, our mill-spinners could be supplied with that article without being obliged to import it.

21. If desirable, what would be the most likely means of effecting the object?

I am at a loss to give an opinion what plan should be adopted to extend the growth and improve the quality of flax in Ireland. Previous to the breaking up of the Linen Board, considerable attention was paid by the members of that board to encourage the growth and improve the quality of flax. They had persons brought from Holland to instruct the farmers here; and I have no doubt of its being of use, but not to the extent that might have been expected. I think the present time is more favourable, and the grower's interest will induce him to produce that crop. I think that object might be forwarded by farming societies much better than by any other means I think of.

22. Are there any defects in the present Linen Act which you think it expedient to amend, and what remedies would you propose to adopt?

The present Linen Act makes the seal-master accountable for all imperfections in the goods he seals; the purchaser has, therefore, a ready means of redress if the seal-masters are persons of respectability, which they should be, and I think generally are. That officer is the only one under the committee who receives any emolument; they are paid by the manufacturers and weavers a certain sum for the sealing and measuring each piece.

23. Are you of opinion that the linen trade of Ireland is an increasing or decreasing trade, and from what circumstances?

I am of opinion the linen trade of Ireland is increasing in quantity (though the last two years is an exception). Our great export demand in the United States, owing to the panic which originated there, and afterwards extended to this country, caused a great diminution in the manufacture last year, and part of this, but it is now increasing rapidly. I should think it is the demand in those markets, and likewise the newer trade to South America, which cause the increase here; the demand for our home trade would not do so.

24. Would it be likely to be extended, or improved, or the condition of the weavers, or any other class engaged in it, benefited, by new Legislative enactments, and of what character?

I cannot see much advantage in any further legislative enactments to extend the trade. If there be a demand for linen anywhere it will be found out; and the increase of demand abroad will naturally increase the manufacture at home.

In conclusion, I beg to state, that the depressed condition of hand-loom weavers in the country, who have families, are greatly increased by the want of employment for females, since

since the introduction of machinery in spinning linen yarn. Previous to that time, all females who chose to spin, could find employment in their own houses under their parents' care; and though it seldom was a lucrative employment, still the mother and one or two daughters were able to earn at least 10 *s.* per week; that, added to about as much earned by one hand-loom weaver, kept a family (in the country, where provisions are comparatively cheap) in tolerable comfort; but deduct the earnings of the females, and it leaves them in poverty and wretchedness. Could any plan be devised to give employment to females, it is my opinion it would go far to relieve (in a great measure) the distressed state of the hand-loom weavers. You will please to observe my observations refer more particularly to the weavers who live in the country, and who weave in their own houses.

I have, &c.

John Walker.

My dear Sir, Larch Mount, Derry, 15 Jan. 1839.

Your queries would have had an earlier answer, but I was from home, and much engaged till now. I have handed a copy to Mr. Patrick Gilman, and one to Mr. James Smyth, who are both engaged in the trade, and intelligent persons.

It seems to me of much consequence that "our rulers" should be better acquainted with the manner the linen manufacture is carried on by the small manufacturers or weavers, spread as they are over a large district of country, and having no regulating head except what the legislature affords them. The great advantage that the large manufacturers have over those poor hard-working people is the regularity with which they can have the goods manufactured, in point of equality of fabric, and in the quantity of any description that may be required, and the security their respectability affords to those who deal with them.

On the other hand, if an extensive manufacturer chooses to manufacture dishonestly, he can do it, as is the case in the German linens (so far as I have seen) generally, and in some instances in British and also in Irish linens; this, if it should be carried on to any considerable extent, would seriously injure the character of the manufactures, and should as far as possible be guarded against. It was so guarded by the former Act; but at that time, white linen seals were necessary, and made it more easy to afford protection. As it is at present, nothing more I think could be done than to make it illegal to sell, or offer for sale, or enter for exportation, any plain linen cloth, not being of equal fineness and thickness throughout, as is now the case in linens sold in the brown markets. Another great injury the linen trade sustains is the making up cotton so as to represent linen, but I do not know how this fraud could be prevented; it has done more harm to the linen manufacture than any other.

Premiums or bounties, I think, ought not in any case to be resorted to; but an understanding with the French Government to equalize the duty on linen and linen yarn imported into France would serve the manufacturers amazingly; I mean the duty on linens lowered, and the reduction might be put on yarn, that now pays nominally in France; but the better way would be to take off the linen duties in both countries, and let us meet on equal terms. I do not think we have any reason to fear French or even German competition at home any more than abroad. I write this in a hurry, and have not time to take a copy of it.

I have, &c.

Richd. M. Muggeridge, Esq. *Carey M'Clellan.*

Query 1. Are you a member of any, and what committee, for appointing seal-masters, inspectors, &c.?

I am a member of the linen committee for the county of Derry.

2. Can you state the number of seal-masters and inspectors appointed by or acting under your committee; the markets for which they are appointed, and their names, addresses, and other occupations?

Not exactly.

3. Do the inspectors make periodical, or any, returns to the committee of the amount of fines they have levied; if so, what are they, and what has been their application?

They do; and the fines are applied to remunerate them.

4. Are you of opinion that any considerable quantity of hand-spun yarn is sold deficient in count and length?

The quantity is said to be considerable.

5. Would you recommend any more efficient regulation of the yarn market, and of what kind?

I would recommend a fixed hour for the markets to commence, and a penalty for earlier purchases on market days, and a paid inspector to see the law obeyed; one at least for each county.

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6. Are you of opinion that the substitution of mill-spun for hand-spun yarn, as far as it extends, has been beneficial or otherwise to any, and what, class of persons engaged in the linen manufacture, and in what manner?

Beneficial to the trade, but removing the manufacture in a great degree from the community at large to individuals of large capital.

7. Is it your opinion that the mill-spun yarn will ultimately supersede the hand-spun altogether, or to what extent?

In time I think it will nearly altogether, as it has already done in the finer numbers.

8. Do you consider there is much embezzlement or theft of linen yarn, by weavers or their families, and is it carried on to an extent to affect detrimentally the trade, by lowering the quality of the article produced; or in any other manner?

Not, I think, to any extent, where common attention is paid.

9. Are the present laws sufficient to punish or check this offence, and the purchasing of stolen or embezzled yarn; and if not, what enactment would you substitute?

I am not aware that any new law is wanted here except that, in cases of complaint against weavers, the matter should be left to a magistrate to decide, or submit it to a jury of three weavers or manufacturers.

10. Do the present laws afford manufacturers adequate facility for the recovery of property entrusted to weavers, in cases of suspected embezzlement, or other dishonesty?

Perhaps some improvement might be made in this; but I am not sufficiently acquainted with the case to say.

11. What enactment would be advisable on this subject?

(*Not answered.*)

12. Has the condition of the hand-loom weavers' families been much depressed by the falling off in the quantity and amount of remuneration of yarn spun by them, and to what other occupation have they now recourse as a substitute?

It has to a lamentable extent, as the females have not got any other occupation as yet.

13. Are there great numbers of weavers, and in what localities, now weaving for manufacturers who formerly wove for the market; under what circumstances has such a change been effected, and at what period; and has it benefited or depressed the condition of the weavers?

The weavers all complain of the change, and their condition is certainly not improved byit.

14. Is it your opinion that the entire trade of linen weaving, or what portion of it, will ultimately fall into the hands of master manufacturers?

The whole of it, I think, in time.

15. What are the relative advantages and disadvantages of manufacturers giving out materials to be woven for them at a price, and purchasing webs in the public market?

In the one case they are both manufacturers and merchants; in the other, manufacturers or merchants, not both.

16. What is the condition, moral and physical, of the hand-loom weavers in your district?

All poor, and generally well conducted.

17. Are there more or less female weavers in your neighbourhood than formerly; and at what period, and under what circumstances, did such increase or diminution take place?

There were never many here; nor do I think the number has increased.

18. Has such increase or diminution had any, and what, effect, on the wages of the male weavers?

(*Not answered.*)

19. Has the quality of the flax produced in Ireland deteriorated, or improved, since the breaking up of the Linen Board, or from any particular period; and from what causes has the deterioration or improvement arisen?

The regulations of the Linen Board are very useful as far as regarded the importation, of flax seed for sowing.

20. Would it be desirable to extend the growth and cultivation of flax in Ireland, and in what particular provinces and counties?

No description of crop that I know of would benefit the north and west of Ireland so much as flax.

21. If desirable, what would be the most likely means of effecting the object?

Secure the growers as far as possible against being imposed on by bad flax seed, by restoring the law for inspecting it before offered for sale.

22. Are

22. Are there any defects in the present Linen Act which you think it expedient to amend, and what remedies would you propose to adopt?

I consider an efficient inspection of flax seed among the most important; it would be very useful in this part of the country to restore the power of granting leases, renewable, as was the case under the old Acts, and for like purposes.

23. Are you of opinion that the linen trade of Ireland is an increasing or decreasing trade, and from what circumstances?

I consider the trade increasing at present, owing, I think, to the low price, as much as anything else.

24. Would it be likely to be extended, or improved, or the condition of the weavers, or any other class engaged in it, benefited, by new Legislative enactments, and of what character?

This takes in a large field; but confining it to the manufacture, there is little wanted beyond what is noticed above. Brown seal-masters should be answerable for the merchantable state of the linen, without the necessity of so much proof, as at present. Their stamp or seal should itself be proof, as formerly, by the old Act. At present the proof must be that it was bought in the public market.

Carey M'Clellan.

Larch Mount, Londonderry,
14 Jan. 1839.

Loughgall, 28 January 1839.

Query 1. Are you a member of any, and what committee, for appointing seal-masters, inspectors, &c.?

None.

2. Can you state the number of seal-masters and imspectors appointed by or acting under your committee; the markets for which they are appointed, and their names, address, and other occupations?

This we do not know.

3. Do the inspectors make periodical, or any, returns to the committee of the amount of fines they have levied; if so, what are they, and what has been their application?

This we do not know.

4. Are you of opinion that any considerable quantity of hand-spun yarn is sold deficient in count and length?

This is carried on in many parts of Ireland, of being deficient in both length and count, and that to a great extent.

5. Would you recommend any more efficient regulation of the yarn market, and of what kind?

A better regulation in the yarn market is much wanted, and in many parts of Ireland there are no proper inspectors over the markets where a great deal of yarn is sold; in other parts the yarn merchants themselves pay men to apprehend dishonest yarn; we consider there is nothing more injurious to the trade than dishonest yarn, for want of regular inspectors being placed over every market where yarn is sold; this we think would put a final stop to the like.

6. Are you of opinion that the substitution of mill-spun for hand-spun yarn, as far as it extends, has been beneficial or otherwise to any and what class of persons engaged in the linen manufacture, and in what manner?

Beneficial to capitalists raising machinery for spinning; beneficial to manufacturers, because when they purchase mill-spun yarn they have it correct and right, and know what they are getting, and by that means can derive more profit from it than from hand-spun yarn; detrimental to the lower class, or hand-spinners.

7. Is it your opinion that the mill-spun yarn will ultimately supersede the hand-spun altogether, or to what extent?

The mill-spun yarn in the meantime has superseded the hand-spun to a great extent, and within the last few years; at the present there is not more than the one-fourth hand-spun, of the quantity used in all cases; and if a better regulation in the hand-spun does not be adopted, it may in a few years be superseded altogether.

8. Do you consider there is much embezzlement or theft of linen yarn, by weavers or their families, and is it carried on to an extent to affect detrimentally the trade, by lowering the quality of the article produced; or in any other manner?

There is a great deal of yarn embezzled, and particularly the property of manufacturers, which not only lowers the quality of the article, but reduces the wages or profit of the weaver or manufacturer.

9. Are the present laws sufficient to punish or check this offence, and the purchasing of stolen or embezzled yarn; and if not, what enactment would you substitute?

We consider the present law not sufficient to check this offence of embezzlement, or the purchasing of such yarns; we consider six months' imprisonment, or three times the amount of yarn embezzled, to be levied off either the buyer or seller, not too strict a law for such offences.

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10. Do the present laws afford manufacturers adequate facility for the recovery of property entrusted to weavers, in cases of suspected embezzlement, or other dishonesty?

We consider they do not.

11. What enactment would be advisable on this subject?

Our opinion would be similar to that of 9th question, six months' imprisonment, or fined in three times the amount embezzled; as one months' imprisonment a weaver thinks little of it, if he has perhaps embezzled or destroyed a few pounds' worth of yarn, and of no property to recover it off him.

12. Has the condition of the hand-loom weavers' families been much depressed by the falling off in the quantity and amount of remuneration of yarn spun by them, and to what other occupation have they now recourse as a substitute?

Where they have no other support than by spinning, the profit they derive from it would not procure half the food they should have, and many have to do with it. Others who can weave will do it, as they can make more by weaving than spinning.

13. Are there great numbers of weavers, and in what localities, now weaving for manufacturers who formerly wove for the market; under what circumstances has such a change been effected, and at what period; and has it benefited or depressed the condition of the weavers?

There are great numbers of weavers now weaving for manufacturers that formerly wove for the market; the reason we attribute to this, that from the low state of trade, this last two years, they could not earn what would support their families, consequently they were in many instances obliged to expend what capital they might have towards the support of their family, so that by this they were unable to weave for the market, and then fell in to weave for manufacturers, which we consider is better for the weavers than going to markets to sell their own webs; and which many of our own weavers confess that they can make more, weaving for us than for themselves, by reason the manufacturers can, by sending goods forward direct to order, and regularly and fairly made, obtain a better price than weavers selling in the market.

14. Is it your opinion that the entire trade of linen weaving, or what portion of it, will ultimately fall into the hands of master manufacsurers?

We are of opinion, if a better regulation in the linen market does not take place, that in course of time the trade will all be in the hands of manufacturers; in the meantime the principal part of it is; and the reason many linen buyers assign is, when they purchase linens from manufacturers or any respectable house, they get them all what they expect, and correct in every particular. When they go to public market and buy, they get them with every fraud: want of length and breadth, and a great many other fraudulent acts committed, for want of a better regulation over people who have seals, and will use them, and take people's word for the correctness of the web, without ever measuring the web at all; so that merchants purchasing will not only give the manufacturer a preference, but are glad to get goods from them, knowing they are correct.

15. What are the relative advantage and disadvantage of manufacturers giving out materials to be woven for them at a price, and purchasing webs in the public market?

The advantage which we find in giving out materials to be woven, we get them then made exactly what we want, and cannot get the article so well in the market, nor made to the particular form that is wanted.

16. What is the condition, moral and physical, of the hand-loom weavers in your district?

(*Not answered.*)

17. Are there more or less female weavers in your neighbourhood than formerly; and at what period, and under what circumstances did such increase or diminution take place?

We consider as many, if not more than ever, female weavers; at the time the Linen Board granted premiums to female weavers, there were very few at that time: the premiums then induced them to commence to weave. At that time the trade was doing well, and weavers were fairly remunerated for their work. Since, with the exception of a few years' good trade, the female weavers, as well as the male, was obliged to weave to meet such demands as they have to answer. Landlords in the north having let their lands in war times, and at war prices, and always kept up to such enormous prices, that it requires every exertion of every branch of the family to do all they can to sustain themselves, and pay such high rents.

18. Has such increase or diminution had any, and what effect, on the wages of the male weavers?

The increase of female weavers has materially affected the wages of the male weavers. We consider in our district there are as many female weavers as males, so that from the astonishing amount of cloth that has been made this few years, and very often no demand, that the wages are sunk quite below what they should, and neither the weaver nor employer remunerated; in fact, it is impossible for any weaver or their family, from the present state of trade, to earn what would support them as they should be.

19, 20, 21. Has the quality of the flax produced in Ireland deteriorated, or improved, since the breaking up of the Linen Board, or from any particular period; and from what causes has the deterioration or improvement arisen?—Would it be desirable to extend the growth and cultivation of flax in Ireland, and in what particular provinces and counties?—If desirable, what would be the most likely means of effecting the object?

(*Not answered.*)

22. Are there any defects in the present Linen Act which you think it expedient to amend, and what remedies would you propose to adopt?

We are of opinion that landlords, or any other, should not have it in their power to take or seize yarn entrusted to weavers by manufacturers.

23. Are you of opinion that the linen trade of Ireland is an increasing or decreasing trade, and from what circumstances?

We consider it is decreasing in many particulars, and that the Scotch are taking a great deal of it from us; and because from the depressed state of Ireland, and the poverty of the weavers in general, they cannot make the article that is in demand, or asked for, but must contiuue to work as they are, for want of capital to procure such apparatus needful to make those articles that are in demand.

24. Would it be likely to be extended, or improved, or the condition of the weavers, or any other class engaged in it, benefited, by new Legislative enactments, and of what character?

We cannot say what kind of enactments would be advisable on this subject; but that to promote the prosperity of the linen trade is much wanted, so that both the manufacturer and the operative weaver be placed in a way that both could have fair remunerating profits for their industry.

We would further beg to say, which we know is a fact, and well known to all manufacturers, the embezzling of yarn, and selling it to grocers and persons obtaining licence, is carried on to an extreme; and we would suggest, that if persons obtaining licence were prevented from buying any description of yarn, it would in a great measure put a stop to such offences, and cause all yarn to be sold in public market. Those persons so embezzling would not go to market with such yarn, when they will run to grocers and sell it at an underworth, and purchase goods with it. This is one of the most glaring offences that can be committed, and altogether detrimental to the trade; it is carried on in this way that men of capital will not risk it in the country.

We have here given you our views on any questions we were acquainted with, as far as our knowledge of such things were, and shall feel pleasure in giving you any other information you may in future apply to us for.

We are, &c.,
William Orr & Sons,
Linen Manufacturers, Loughgall.

To Richard M. Muggeridge, Esq.,
Hand-loom Commissioner.

JOINT ANSWERS FROM MANUFACTURERS.

Query 4. Are you of opinion that any considerable quantity of hand-spun yarn is sold deficient in count and length?

The greatest part of yarn sold in the province of Connaught is very deficient in length and count; this is very injurious, as it tends to deceive the manufacturers and weavers in the size of the yarns; besides these deficiencies, they put on large knots with finger instead of the weaver's knot, which cause great loss and injury, as all this kind of knots give way in reed, geers, or shuttle: active, proper inspectors might remedy this.

22. Are there any defects in the present Linen Act which you think it expedient to amend, and what remedies would you propose to adopt?

The Linen Act of Parliament is greatly deficient in this respect, and calls loudly for redress. Petty landlords and middlemen frequently seize and take, for rent and arrears of rent due by their cottiers, the looms, yarn, cloth, apparatus, and materials of manufacturers, given out to weavers for manufacturing purposes, for which we know of no redress: this we consider a serious grievance, and find it a heavy loss; it is very injurious to the manufacture of linen, and creates an unwillingness to trust out property.

We therefore humbly and respectfully suggest, that there should be a bill brought into Parliament to remedy the present Linen Act, as it affords no redress in such cases. We conceive our property, when given to weavers for manufacturing purposes, should not be seized or taken for rent or debt due by them; this was the case in former Acts, during the time of the Linen Board. We once more beg to call your attention to this serious grievance.

8, 9, 10. Do you consider there is much embezzlement or theft of linen yarn, by weavers or their families, and is it carried on to an extent to affect detrimentally the the trade, by lowering the quality of the article produced; or in any other manner?—Are the present laws sufficient to punish or check this offence, and the purchasing of stolen or embezzled yarn; and if not, what enactment would you substitute?—

Linen Manufacture of Ireland.

— —

Report of R. M. Muggeridge, Esq.

Do the present laws afford manufacturers adequate facility for the recovery of property entrusted to weavers, in cases of suspected embezzlement, or other dishonesty?

We consider embezzlement of linen yarn is carried on by weavers and their families to such an extent as to affect the trade detrimentally, and seriously injure and lower the quality of the manufactured article. We find it difficult, almost impossible, to check embezzlement, more particularly so when the charge is against the purchasers, who generally are grocers and spirit dealers. We would suggest, that any person convicted of buying, receiving, taking, or harbouring boiled yarn, be subject to the penalty of the present Linen Act.

MANUFACTURERS.	EMPLOYING	RESIDENCE.
William Orr & Sons	400 looms	Loughgall.
Joseph Orr	250 —	Cranagill.
John M'Donald	200 —	Conanan.
John Robinson	100 —	Deremain.
David Fox	80 —	Derryene.
John Dawson	100 —	Dremisple.
James M'Veese	90 —	
Robert Corrigan	1,000 —	Rusingham.
John Verner	800 —	Derryene.
James Rolston	150 —	Aughinlig.
Michael Doyle	200 weavers	Rhonehill.
William Corrigan	150 —	Keenaghan.
Arthur Marur	300 —	Mnachena.
Robert Croan	650 —	Derryene.
James & John M'Clushey	500 —	Clinmore and Coalislond.
John Linnamore	300 —	Dungarvon.
Mich. Hughes	50 —	Anaghmone.
Hugh O'Neill	300 —	Cook.
John M'Avoy	200 —	Bealemount.

We whose names are hereunto affixed respectfully, but most earnestly, beg your attention to these grievances.

I am, &c.

John M'Avoy.

Bealemount, Dungannon,
2 February 1839.

Crieve, Ballybay, 6 February 1839.

Query 1. Are you a member of any, and what committee, for appointing seal-masters, inspectors, &c.?

I am a member of county Monaghan Committee.

2. Can you state the number of seal-masters and inspectors appointed by or acting under your committee; the markets for which they are appointed, and their names, addresses, and other occupations?

There are five sole seal-masters in this county; viz., Mr. James Bradshaw for Ballybay; Mr. William Thomson, for Clones; Mr. Alexander Johnston, for Monaghan; Mr. John Wright, for Castleblayney; Mr. William Cargill, for Glasslough. There are 11 seals granted to manufacturers; but exclusively for the sealing of linens their own manufacture.

One inspector was appointed by the committee, but from the want of funds, no salary can be attached to the situation, which is consequently but nominally filled.

3. Do the inspectors make periodical, or any, returns to the committee of the amount of fines they have levied; if so, what are they, and what has been their application?

When the inspector performed the duties of the situation he made returns of the fines, &c. &c.

4. Are you of opinion that any considerable quantity of hand-spun yarn is sold deficient in count and length?

A considerable quantity of hand-spun yarn sold in market is deficient in count and length.

5. Would you recommend any more efficient regulation of the yarn market, and of what kind?

I cannot state any regulation likely to produce much effect in our yarn markets.

6. Are you of opinion that the substitution of mill-spun for hand-spun yarn, as far as it extends, has been beneficial or otherwise to any, and what class, of persons engaged in the linen manufacture, and in what manner?

The introduction of mill-spun yarn, I consider, has been beneficial to both the master-manufacturers and weavers, and causes more of the latter to be employed than otherwise would have been.

7. Is

7. Is it your opinion that the mill-spun yarn will ultimately supersede the hand-spun altogether, or to what extent?

It is not my opinion that it will altogether supersede the hand-spun yarn.

8. Do you consider there is much embezzlement or theft of linen yarn, by weavers or their families, and is it carried on to an extent to affect detrimentally the trade, by lowering the quality of the article produced; or in any other manner?

In this county I have not heard of many cases of embezzlement, or theft of yarn, by weavers or their families. Probably in large manufacturing towns it would more frequently occur.

9. Are the present laws sufficient to punish or check this offence, and the purchasing of stolen or embezzled yarn; and if not, what enactment would you substitute?

I think the present laws sufficient to protect the manufacturer, and punish such offences.

10. Do the present laws afford manufacturers adequate facility for the recovery of property entrusted to weavers, in cases of suspected embezzlement, or other dishonesty?

I am of opinion they do.

11. What enactment would be advisable on this subject?

I cannot point out any particular enactment.

12. Has the condition of the hand-loom weavers' families been much depressed by the falling off in the quantity and amount of remuneration of yarn spun by them, and to what other occupation have they now recourse as a substitute?

I do not consider the condition of the weavers, so far as my knowledge extends, has been depressed below what it was ten years ago, when we had little or no mill-spun yarn manufactured in Ireland.

13. Are there great numbers of weavers, and in what localities, now weaving for manufacturers, who formerly wove for the market; under what circumstances has such a change been effected, and at what period; and has it benefited or depressed the condition of the weavers?

A great increase of the number of weavers employed by manufacturers (that formerly wove for the market) has taken place, more especially since 1830 or 1831; in some cases it may have benefited, in others depressed, the condition of the weaver.

14. Is it your opinion that the entire trade of linen weaving, or what portion of it, will ultimately fall into the hands of master manufacturers?

It is my opinion the manufacture of linen will, ere long, fall into the hands of master manufacturers.

15. What are the relative advantages and disadvantages of manufacturers giving out materials to be woven for them at a price, and purchasing webs in the public market?

The master manufacturers do not purchase linen in market: they sell to the bleachers, wholesale drapers, and exporters.

16. What is the condition, moral and physical, of the hand-loom weavers in your district?

The weavers in this district are in general poor, although contented and well conducted; many of them save from their earnings what enables them to emigrate to America, if they are so inclined; and, generally speaking, they are better off than their contemporary agricultural labourers.

17. Are there more or less female weavers in your neighbourhood than formerly; and at what period, and under what circumstances, did such increase or diminution take place?

There are more females weaving in this district than formerly, particularly within the last six or seven years.

18. Has such increase or diminution had any, and what, effect, on the wages of the male weavers?

I am not aware that it has affected weavers' wages.

19. Has the quality of the flax produced in Ireland deteriorated, or improved, since the breaking up of the Linen Board, or from any particular period; and from what causes has the deterioration or improvement arisen?

The quality of flax has deteriorated generally throughout Ireland; I believe owing principally to the subdivision of farms, and the tillage caused thereby not being suited so well to the growth of flax.

20. Would it be desirable to extend the growth and cultivation of flax in Ireland, and in what particular provinces and counties?

It would no doubt be desirable if we could grow sufficient flax for home consumption, and not be depending on foreign supplies, which, in the event of a war with the Baltic or Russian states, would prove of vast importance to all engaged in spinning and manufacturing flax, yarn, and linen, throughout the empire.

21. If desirable, what would be the most likely means of effecting the object?

I feel it almost impossible to offer any practical suggestion likely to effect a permanent extension of the growth of flax in Ireland. Many causes, both physical and commercial, would render such an undertaking difficult to accomplish.

22. Are there any defects in the present Linen Act which you think it expedient to amend, and what remedies would you propose to adopt?

None of much importance, or likely to be amended.

23. Are you of opinion that the linen trade of Ireland is an increasing or decreasing trade, and from what circumstances?

I am of opinion the linen manufacture is decreasing in some parts of Ireland, while it is increasing in others. On the whole, I believe it is on the increase.

24. Would it be likely to be extended, or improved, or the condition of the weavers, or any other class engaged in it, benefited, by new legislative enactments, and of what character?

I cannot discern the good effects likely to be produced by legislative enactments, generally speaking, to any engaged in the trade.

S. Cuningham.

To R. M. Muggeridge, Esq.

Cotton Manufacture of Belfast.

Report of R. M. Muggeridge, Esq.

REPORT on the COTTON MANUFACTURE of *Belfast* and Environs.

THE introduction of the cotton manufacture into Ireland is of comparative modern date. The first piece of cotton cloth wove in that country was made by an ancestor of the present Mr. Francis M'Cracken, of Belfast, in the year 1778–9. At first the manufacture was designed merely as a source of employment for the children in the poor-house at Belfast, and the machinery requisite for the purpose was offered to the trustees of that institution by two benevolent individuals named Joy* and M'Cabe. The trustees refused the offer, and in consequence Messrs. Joy and M'Cabe, with Mr. M'Cracken, formed themselves into a trading company, erected buildings and machinery, and commenced the manufacture of calicoes, dimities and Marseilles quiltings. They also introduced the use of the fly-shuttle. They soon acquired considerable celebrity, and in 1784 a mill for spinning twist by water-power was erected at Whitehouse, near Belfast. From that period the manufacture increased so rapidly, that in 1800 it is stated to have afforded employment or maintenance, directly and indirectly, to 27,000 persons, at and within a circuit of 10 miles of that town. In 1811, the number of bags of cotton wool imported into Belfast was 14,320, the number exported 3,007, leaving 11,313 for home consumption. So great, however, has been the decrease of the cotton manufacture of late years, arising from the comparative cheaper production of England and Scotland, and the profitable substitution of linen yarn for cotton yarn spinning, that, in 1837, the total imports of all Ireland did not exceed 8,700 bags. With the exception of half a dozen mills still engaged in the spinning of cotton yarn,† the cotton trade of Belfast may now be said to be confined to the production of fabrics by hand-loom labour.

These are principally muslins or jaconets, twilled cords, unions, a few ginghams, shawls and checked handkerchiefs, the two latter termed the harness or zebra trade.

The opening of the Commission in Belfast was attended by a considerable number both of the operatives and their employers. The former also convened trade meetings of their own body, to determine on the best mode of laying evidence of their condition before the Commission; and at these meetings it was agreed that a selection should be made of some of the most intelligent of the workmen, in whom their fellows had the greatest confidence, to be proposed as witnesses. This arrangement was acquiesced in; but it was not permitted to prevent any person, not so deputed, from giving evidence, if disposed to do so.

On the part of the weavers, *John Boyd*, an operative, was examined at considerable length. He estimated the total number of cotton weavers residing at Belfast, and within a circuit of 10 miles round it, at from 12,000 to 15,000. In order to show the extent of the reduction which had taken place in the wages of the weavers, from 1792 to the present time, witness read the annexed scale of prices for a 20-hundred nine-eighth stout jaconet:—

AVERAGE TABLES.

Price per Ell for 46 Inches of 2,000 ⅛ Stout Jaconet, 135 Shots to the Inch, from 1792 to 1838.

	s.	d.		s.	d.	£.	s.	d.
1792	2	8	1796	2	8			
1793	2	8	1797	2	3			
1794	2	8	1798	1	11			
1795	2	3	1799	1	11			

From

* Father of Chief Baron Joy.

† Employing under 1,000 hands.

Cotton Manufacture of Belfast.

Report of R. M. Muggeridge, Esq.

From 1792 to 1799, five pieces of 2,000 $\frac{2}{8}$ jaconet, the same fabric as mentioned in the scale, would have paid the house-rent for a four-loom house - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - £. 5 16 8

Winding per Spangle, 8 *d.*

	s.	d.		s.	d.
1800	1	11	1804	1	11
1801	1	11	1805	1	11
1802	2	3	1806	1	9
1803	1	11			

From 1799 to 1806, seven pieces and one-fourth of said fabric would have paid the rent of a three-loom house* - - - - - - - - - 6 16 6

Winding per Spangle, 8 *d.*

	s.	d.		s.	d.
1807	1	9	1811	1	6
1808	1	8	1812	1	6
1809	1	8	1813	1	6
1810	1	8			

From 1806 to 1813, eight pieces of said fabric would have paid the rent of a three-loom house - - - - - - - - - - - - - - 6 16 6

Winding per Spangle, 6 *d.*

	s.	d.		s.	d.
1814	1	6	1818	1	–
1815	1	6	1819	–	10
1816	1	–	1820	–	10
1817	–	10			

From 1813 to 1820, twelve and a half pieces of said fabric would have paid the rent of a three-loom house† - - - - - - - - - - 6 16 6

Winding per Spangle, 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ *d.*

	s.	d.		s.	d.
1821	–	9	1825	–	$7\frac{1}{2}$
1822	–	9	1826	–	6
1823	–	$8\frac{1}{4}$	1827	–	6
1824	–	8			

From 1820 to 1827, seventeen pieces and three quarters of said fabric would have paid the rent of a three-loom house - - - - - - - - 5 10 –

Winding per Spangle, 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ *d.*

	s.	d		s.	d
1828	–	$4\frac{1}{2}$	1832	–	$3\frac{3}{8}$
1829	–	$4\frac{1}{2}$	1833	–	$3\frac{7}{8}$
1830	–	4	1834	–	$3\frac{7}{8}$
1831	–	$3\frac{3}{8}$			

From 1827 to 1834, thirty pieces of said fabric would have paid the rent for a three-loom house - - - - - - - - - - - - 5 – –

Winding per head of 20 Skeans, 1 *d.*

	s.	d.		s.	d.
1835	–	$3\frac{7}{8}$	1837	–	$3\frac{7}{8}$
1836	–	$3\frac{7}{8}$	1838	–	$3\frac{7}{8}$

From 1834 to 1838, thirty-two and one quarter pieces of said fabric would have paid the rent of a three-loom house - - - - - - - - 5 – –

Winding per head, 1 *d.*

In

* From 1799 to 1820, house-rent ran in a proportionate rate with other property.

† From 1820 to 1830, there was a slight decline. From 1830 to 1838 a still further decline, as is shown by the table.

In the septennial period from 1792 to 1799, the weavers' weekly average earnings at the before-mentioned fabric would be 2 *l.* 6 *s.* 8 *d.*

	£.	*s.*	*d.*
From 1799 to 1806 - - - - -	1	18	4
From 1806 to 1813 - - - - -	1	11	8

Average price per ell, 1 *s.* 7 *d.*

£. 1. 11 *s.* 8 *d.* would, at the then price of potatoes, purchase 1,284 lbs. at 2 *s.* 9 *d.* per 112 lbs., or 192 lbs. of oatmeal at 18 *s.* 6 *d.* per 112 lbs. Divide each of them by 2, and it will show the command his wages gave him over each of these two necessaries of life.

From 1813 to 1820 - - - - - £. 1. 1 *s.* 8 *d.*

Average price per ell, 1 *s.* 1 *d.*

This would purchase 939 lbs. of potatoes at 2 *s.* 7 *d.* per 112 lbs., or 132 lbs. of oatmeal at 18 *s.* 4 *d.*, showing a decline of 203 lbs. of food between the two periods last named.

From 1820 to 1827 - - - - - 12 *s.* 6 *d.*

Average price per ell, 7 ½ *d.*

This would purchase 600 lbs. of potatoes at 2 *s.* 4 *d.*, or 104 lbs. of oatmeal at 13 *s.* 3 *d.*, showing a command of 352 lbs. of food.

From 1827 to 1834 - - - - - 6 *s.* 8 *d.*

Average price per ell, 4 *d.*

This would purchase 448 lbs. of potatoes at 1 *s.* 8 *d.*, or 59 lbs. of oatmeal at 12 *s.* 7 *d.* per 112 lbs., showing an average command of 253 lbs. of food.

From 1834 to 1838 - - - - - - 6 *s.* 3 *d.*

Average price per ell, 3 ¾ *d.*

This would purchase 400 lbs. of potatoes at 1 *s.* 9 *d.* per hundred, or 69 lbs. of oatmeal at 11 *s.* 5 *d.*, showing an average command of 234 ½ lbs. of food.

The average prices of oatmeal and potatoes, above given, are taken from the books at the poor-house, taken on the 1st January each year. The weavers have to buy from the retailer, and pay from 4 *d.* to 7 *d.* for the hundred above the current price of the market. The poor-house contract for their potatoes and meal, and get each at the cheapest period of the year, and at the best market. The weavers buy usually upon credit, from week to week, and generally only from half a stone to a whole stone.

From 1800 to 1816 the rents of houses increased considerably. A house capable of containing three looms would be almost six guineas a year; latterly they have declined, and now perhaps would be 5 *l.* or 5 *l.* 10 *s.* a year.

James Parke, another witness, says, on the subject of weavers' earnings.

In 1791 a man could earn, by a fair day's weaving, about 4 *s.* a day.

In 1800, from 2 *s.* 6 *d.* to 3 *s.* 6 *d.* a day.

In 1810, from 2 *s.* to 2 *s.* 6 *d.* a day.

In 1820, about 1 *s.* 6 *d.* a day.

In 1830

In 1838, at the present time, they could not earn more than from 10 *d.* to 1 *s.*

John Campbell, a muslin weaver, in the employ of Messrs. Hutchinson & Co., on a 17^{00} $\frac{5}{4}$ lawn, stated, that he was paid 3 $\frac{1}{10}$ *d.* per yard for the weaving. He could do three pieces in the week, which would bring him in, net, 7 *s.* 9 *d.*, from which 1 *s.* 6 *d.* a week would have to be deducted for expenses. He worked, on the average, 13 hours daily, to make this sum. Only two years ago he could earn 2 *s.* 3 *d.* more in the week than he could now on the same work.

James Frazer, Esq., agent for Messrs. James Hutchinson & Co. of Glasgow, on this subject, gave 5 *s.* 6 *d.* clear, as the weekly earnings of each, of about 1,300

Cotton Manufacture of Belfast.

Report of R. M. Muggeridge, Esq.

1,300 looms, which he employed. He added, that weavers must work 14 or 15 hours a day to clear that sum weekly. The fabrics on which they were engaged were book and twill muslins, imitation cambrics, and stout jaconets.

Mr. *Henderson Bell*, agent to Messrs. Lee & Co., of Glasgow, zebra dress manufacturers, gave the following average earnings of a class of his weavers, as a fair portion of the whole body:—

AVERAGE TABLES.

NAMES.	Dress.	Fines.	TOTAL Cash.	Weekly Earnings.	Looms.
		s. *d.*	£. *s.* *d.*	£. *s.* *d.*	
Samuel Toland	85	– 6	6 16 8	– 5 $3\frac{1}{13}$	2
James Megraw	108	– –	8 14 1	– 6 $8\frac{9}{26}$	2
Joseph Savage	100	– –	8 – 11	– 6 $2\frac{7}{26}$	3
Henry Jamison	145	– –	11 13 3	– 8 $11\frac{17}{26}$	3
John Donley	107	– –	8 12 1	– 5 $11\frac{19}{26}$	4
Henry Christian	94	– –	7 11 2	– 6 $3\frac{2}{13}$	4
Alexander Mehaffy*	128	2 11	10 17 7	– 8 $4\frac{11}{26}$	2
Robert Morrow	131	– –	10 6 11	– 7 $11\frac{1}{2}$	3
James Peel	139	– 6	11 3 $8\frac{1}{2}$	– 8 $7\frac{1}{2}$	2
William Pritchart	139	1 4	11 3 $8\frac{1}{2}$	– 8 $7\frac{1}{2}$	4
John Smith	118	3 1	9 9 11	– 7 $3\frac{17}{26}$	1
Thomas Mitchell	158	– –	12 14 4	– 9 $9\frac{5}{13}$	1
TOTALS	1,452	8 4	117 4 4	4 19 $11\frac{8}{13}$	32

* Alexander Mehaffy. Blue dressing, $\frac{1}{2}d.$ per ell more.

Six months taken for the average, commencing on the 3d of March, September 1st, 1838.

Average wages per week to each man, 7*s.* 5*d.*

Sir,

In reducing down the total amount to a week's earnings a fraction is lost, which amounts in total to 6*s.* $5\frac{5}{13}d.$

Ballymacarrett, 13 September 1838. (signed) *Henderson Bell.*

Average number of dressings made in the week by each man 4 $\frac{3}{8}$ds. The average period of work is 17 hours per day to make this. The money allowed for winding incurs the debt per the getting of the loom for that work. Out of the 7*s.* 5*d.* are to be deducted, dressing 3*d.* per week; tallow and oil $1\frac{1}{2}d.$ per week; light 6*d.* per week; 3*d.* a week for fire in the loom-shop; 6*d.* a week for bent of loom-rent; 1*s.* 3*d.* per week for rent of loom-stand, with kitchen stuff to select in.

	s.	*d.*
Dressing	–	3
Tallow and Oil	–	$1\frac{1}{2}$
Light	–	6
Fire	–	6
Loomstead rent	–	6
	1	$9\frac{1}{2}$

	s.	*d.*
Of single loom earnings	7	5
Expenses	1	$9\frac{1}{2}$
	5	$6\frac{1}{2}$

The following statement of the average earnings of the harness-weavers of Belfast was mutually agreed upon by a committee of masters and men, appointed to investigate the matter and report thereon in writing to the Assistant Commissioners.

Belfast, 12 September 1838.

At a meeting of the above date of the weavers and manufacturers of the Harness department, by order of Her Majesty's Commissioners, to settle the average wages of 12 of the weavers of Mr. Stewart, and 12 of Mr. Pelling's, as follows:

Mr. Stewart, in the chair.
Mr. Pelling.
Mr. Bell, not present.
Mr. Maguire.
Mr. Clarke.
Mr. Gilmore.

The following are the 12 names taken from Mr. Pelling's books, in Great Patrick-street, No. 63.

Archibald

Archibald M'Donnell, from 8th March to 8th September 1838, earned by weaving, 15*l.* 12*s.*, or 12*s.* per week; James Currie, from 8th March to 8th September 1838, earned by weaving, 10*l.* 18*s.*, or 8*s.* 4*d.* per week; Arthur M'Farlane, from 8th March to 8th September 1838, earned by weaving, 11*l.* 8*s.*, or 8*s.* 10*d.* per week; Joseph Ralstone, from 8th March to 8th September 1838, earned by weaving, 9*l.* 16*s.*, or 7*s.* 6*d.* per week; George Campbell, from 8th March to 8th September 1838, earned by weaving, 13*l.* 10*s.*, or 10*s.* 4*d.* per week; Thomas Ferrie, from 8th March to 8th September 1838, earned by weaving, 7*l.* 4*s.*, or 5*s.* 6*d.* per week; William Reaney, from 8th March to 8th September 1838, earned by weaving, 10*l.* 18*s.*, or 8*s.* 4*d.* per week; Hugh Dobbin, from 8th March to 8th September 1838, earned by weaving, 9*l.* 5*s.* or 7*s.* per week; Samuel M'Kee, from 8th March to 8th September 1838, earned by weaving, 11*l.* 15*s.*, or 9*s.* per week; Thomas Longhead, from 8th March to 8th September 1838, earned by weaving, 9*l.* 4*s.*, or 7*s.* per week; Thomas M'Kee, from 8th March to 8th September 1838, earned by weaving, 11*l.* 14*s.*, or 9*s.* per week; William Breddy, from 8th March to 8th September 1838, earned by weaving, 9*l.*, or 6*l.* 10*s.* per week.

The average of Mr. Pelling's 12 weavers appears to be 8*s.* 3½*d.* per week, which will be 5¼ dress per day.

The following is a statement of Mr. Stewart's 12 weavers, taken from his books on the 12th September 1838, in Church-street.

Weavers' names:—John Jamieson, from 1st March to 1st September 1838, earned by weaving, 13*l.*, or 10*s.* per week; Thomas Millar, from 19th February to 19th August, earned by weaving, 13*l.*, or 8*s.* 8*d.* per week; John Watson, from 5th March to 7th September, earned by weaving, 13*l.*, or 9*s.* per week; James Sloan, from 13th January to 14th August, earned by weaving, 9*l.* 15*s.*, or 6*s.* 8*d.* per week; Bernard Ferris, from 8th February to 30th August, earned by weaving, 13*l.*, or 9*s.* per week; Hugh M'Neill, from 16th January to 10th August, earned by weaving, 9*l.* 15*s.*, or 6*s.* 8½*d.* per week; Samuel Kerr, from 17th March to 30th August, earned by weaving, 13*l.*, or 12*s.* 4½*d.* per week; John Malherron, from 1st April to 30th August, earned by weaving, 9*l.* 15*s.*, or 6*s.* 10*d.* per week; Arthur Donnally, from 1st January to 11th September, earned by weaving, 9*l.* 15*s.*, or 3*s.* 6*d.* per week; John Blakely, from 10th February to 10th August, earned by weaving, 9*l.* 15*s.*, or 7*s.* 6*d.* per week; John Fulton, from 1st April to 23d August, earned by weaving, 9*l.* 15*s.*, or 7*s.* per week; John Darby, from 10th February to 1st August, earned by weaving, 9*l.* 15*s.*, or 7*s.* 6*d.* per week.

The average of Mr. Stewart's 12 weavers appears to be 8*s.* 2½*d.* per week, which will be 5¼ dress per week.

The expenses attending a cover and sixth, or one and one-sixth cover wrought by machine.

	£.		
For wear and tear	–	–	6
Loom stand	–	–	4
Dressing, and tallow and oil	–	–	2
Carriage	–	–	2½
Total	£. –	1	2½

We, the undersigned, consider that 5¼ dress of a 1⅙ cover, to be a regular and fair work for a man to do in the week,

	£.		
Which in all, is	–	8	3½
Off for expenses, as above	–	1	2½
Making the wages in all	£. –	7	1

We also consider that four dress of back lash to be a regular work for a man in the week,

	£.		
Which makes in all	–	11	–
For dressing 2*s.* 6*d.*, expenses as on other side, 1*s.* 2½*d.*	–	3	8½
Making the wages in all	£. –	7	3½

William Stewart, Manufacturer.
Peter Pelling, Manufacturer.
Michael Maguire, Weaver.
Young Clerk, Weaver.
John Gilmore, Weaver.

Of the 10,000 weavers in Belfast, and the surrounding districts, 5,100 are now employed by the Scotch houses, and about 600 by the Messrs. Dixon, of Carlisle. The sole inducement to these houses to put out work at so great a distance from home is the comparative lower rate of wages. The Scotch houses import their yarn in the grey state; when the goods are made up, they are shipped to Scotland grey, bleached in that country, and then frequently again sent over to Ireland for sale in the Irish market. The cost of transit, the

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attendant risk and delay, have each to be included in the cost of production, and to be met out of the fund appropriated to the payment of wages. Mr. James Kennedy, the employer of about 1,800 weavers, stated that he had known wages in Belfast to be from 30 to 40 per cent. lower than in Glasgow, but at present it was not much above 10 per cent. He thought much of the distress of the weavers was attributable to causes within their own control, in proof of which he said :—

We have about 1,400 muslin weavers, and out of that number there were 400 who had their webs out for three months, without a piece being returned. Their engagement was to complete the web in six or seven weeks. This was the estimate I made from my books a month ago, before the harvest had at all commenced. It would be an ordinary average, except perhaps in the middle of winter, when they have nothing else to do. I account for it by many of our weavers being small farmers, and some being obliged to work for their landlords, to pay their rent; that is, to give him a portion of their labour; and also from the very common practice of weavers drawing work from more than one warehouse at the same time; a practice, I believe, more common in the country than in the town. The weavers are made liable to fines for this, but I never enforce it, partly from the poverty of the weavers, and partly that I prefer discharging a man who keeps out his web above four or five months. We consider the law very defective on this point; we are compelled to give the weaver 14 days notice to bring in his work, and if he promises to do so, or we let him off, we have to give him a fresh 14 days' notice. I think wages are lowered by the work being kept out so long as it is, as we are besides losing the interest of our capital. But for this we could afford to pay our weavers as high as the Scotch or English. I could give an order to a Scotch house, and they would complete it in six weeks, whereas we should not have a fourth part of a similar order perfected in this country within that time. I feel the effects of this not only monthly but weekly. It prevents our succeeding in the export trade. These orders are usually large, and have to be executed in a given time, usually a short one, and we are compelled to decline them from the impossibility of getting the goods made in the required period. I am not speaking at all of goods which would be made in England or Ireland by power, but by the hand-loom.

About four or five years ago, I promised my weavers an advance if they would work out their goods within a reasonable time: I took the time that others of my weavers did their work in. Not one in twenty of them brought in the work within the time. I think the weavers in Ireland are not, generally speaking, as industrious as the English or Scotch; and the latter do more work because they usually work together in weaving factories or large shops, and one stimulates the other. They have also greater facilities for doing their work, and lose less time, as the materials are ready at their hands, and the looms and the materials would each be of a better nature being found by the employer than by the workman. The warps are ready prepared for weaving also, which is an advantage. Here the poverty of the weaver frequently compels him to work with very indifferent materials, and he cannot do as much work as he would with better. I am about to establish a factory of this kind on an extensive scale. It has been already tried successfully with the linen.

I think the trade in embezzled weft, which is carried on here, exceedingly injurious to the fair trader of the country; it produces a bad article, which can always be sold much cheaper than a good one, and has, I think, reduced the character of the town in the trading community very much. The people that manufacture goods out of this sort of yarn are generally very poor; they sell for cash in an unbleached state. In depressed times they are forced to take whatever price they can get; the consequence is, the fair manufacturer is compelled to reduce his wages to enable him to meet those people in the market. *I think half, or indeed I should think more, of the goods sold by the warehouses of Belfast, for the home trade, are made out of this sort of yarn.* The goods are very unfairly manufactured; the outside fold will be made out of the best yarn they can get, the inner folds of inferior yarn, and of different numbers or fineness, so of course the whole piece is a deception. There is a clause in the Weavers' and Manufacturers' Bill* (the 14th) on

* *Vide* Mr. Malony's Evidence.

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on this subject, which I approve of, and which I think to a considerable degree would remove this evil. There are many respectable houses that buy these goods in Belfast, and I think the opprobrium which would attach to them, if this Bill was operative, would induce them to desist from a practice to which only self interest can bind them. A few years ago an article, called harness shawls, was made here by the regular manufacturer, of which there was a considerable sale. The weavers on this work were very fairly paid, and could earn wages which enabled them to live comfortably. After some time, these small manufacturers, or corks, began to make them out of embezzled yarn; a depression in the trade took place. These men were unable to hold over the goods, and in two or three weeks they fell from 25 to 30 per cent. The regular manufacturer was obliged to reduce his wages very considerably, and make the article worse; the consequence was, that an article which would have been a staple in the market here, is now very little inquired for, and is principally in the hands of these jobbing manufacturers; I believe the weavers of them at present are miserably paid, as well as the manufacturers; in fact, the trade may be said to have ceased.

James Stirling, esq., manufacturer of plain and striped goods, also attributed much of the distress to the weavers themselves. He says:—

The weavers have, I think, done themselves great injury and ruined the white trade by the job trade; by this, I mean, the fact of many weavers buying a warp, and then getting some of the embezzled yarn, and making a piece of goods which they dispose of to the jobbers, at prices under which it can be made by the regular manufacturers; the same system is going on to a frightful extent in Glasgow also. I took an order for 300 pieces of goods in the month of May; I was bound to deliver them in July; I put out the webs in the former month, and they were to be sent home in the middle of July; at this moment, the 14th September, I have got but 100 pieces in; the remaining 200 are out; I sent the 100 pieces in, and the other 200 they will not take, because the season is past. I was offered an order for 3,000 pieces of satin stripe mouselin de laine, in the month of August, to be finished and sent in by the month of October, at a rate that would have amply remunerated me, but I was obliged to decline it from a conviction that I could not get it done in time; the weavers never care about disappointing a manufacturer; if they can get anything else to do, his work may remain in the loom for months. I recommended the person offering me the order for the 3,000 pieces, to go to Glasgow and get it executed. I cannot account for the difference between the Irish, and the English and Scotch weavers, but the laziness of the former, that is, the regular town weavers; the country weavers have mostly bits of land, and have to do agricultural work for themselves, and often for others; for their landlords, for instance. No manufacturer here can take an order if he is limited to time; the consequences are greatly detrimental to our trade. We have neither as good a market for yarn as Manchester or Glasgow; we buy better there than here, though we pay commission; neither have we as good a market to sell our goods as the British. These are reasons why our weavers are not as well off as the Scotch; I account for Scotch houses putting out work here, to the fact, that they want more work done than they can get in Scotland, and also that they get it done cheaper here; if they can afford to wait, it may do well enough for them to come here. A man with 100 *l.* in Glasgow, may do as well as a man with 300 *l.* capital here, because he turns his capital quicker by getting his work done quicker, and also buys his yarn cheaper. The job trade is also a cash trade, there is no credit at all; his money, therefore, goes a great way. Labour being cheaper here than in England and Scotland, is the only inducement I can think of to bring any manufacturer here at all; a manufacturer in Glasgow, who formerly had an establishment here, told me, that the cheapness of labour here was so proverbial, that he found the credit of putting out his work here beneficial to him; he has not however continued it.

Mr. *Arthur Hill Thornton*, speaking on this subject, says:—

The mode in which work is detained by a portion of the weavers in this country, will, if not obviated, drive the trade out of the country. We have a large rural population, partly weavers and partly labourers, or small holders of land. These people detain the work twice or three times as long as it is necessary; others take out perhaps two or three webs at once. I once had an

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order from John Horner & Co., of Edinburgh, for 10,000 pieces of goods. Mr. Horner told me what he could get them done at, at Dundee, and offered me the same; it was a time bargain. I gave out 2,100 pieces over the 10,000. I forfeited the penalty by wanting 160 pieces at the time I covenanted to deliver them in, though I had taken the precaution of giving out so many extra. This was in 1822. I sold many of the surplus pieces at half what they cost me making. The Scotch and English have advantages over us as manufacturers; but this is a much better weaving country. We have great numbers of villages, and most of them densely populated. In these situations rents are vastly low, and provisions generally cheaper than in England or Scotland. If the return of the work was under proper regulation here, more work would be sent here from England and Scotland; there would be a great extension of employment. At present we have much put out here by English and Scotch houses, but these are all of standard articles, and are not so profitable to the weavers as fancy articles would be. Those are not brought here for the causes I have named, the detention. The natural remedy I would propose on this subject would be, to make it penal on a weaver who should apply for work when he has a web from another house, or who should not return it in proper time. Employment is the only balm to heal the wounds of Ireland, and unless this is afforded the trade of Ireland must leave it; nothing would be so likely to give it, as regularity of labour when they have work. Whatever the manufacturer loses by this detention, he of course gets out of the weavers, by reducing the rate of wages; he has no other means of paying himself.

Mr. *Alexander Moncrieff* says:—Another tendency of low wages is to delay the completion of the work given to them. This is an evil to the manufacturer as well as to the weaver, and productive of even lower wages. It would prevent a manufacturer taking a large order for time bargains. An English manufacturer would take an order for some thousand pieces to complete within say a month or six weeks, which an Irish manufacturer could not venture to do, because he could not depend on getting his work finished in the time. He would have to give out some hundreds of pieces more than his order to ensure getting them in, and of course would have to regulate his wages on the scale at which he could probably dispose of this surplus. It also prevents merchants having large orders from coming to the market here, because they cannot command quantity, as in England or Scotland.

Mr. *Moorcroft*, another manufacturer, says:—Whenever a quantity of goods is wanted for the export market, it is usually wanted in large quantities, and the manufacturers here, from making so many different kinds of goods, have not the adequate quantity of any one or two particular articles to meet or supply such a demand; the consequence is, such orders are carried elsewhere. Some weeks ago a respectable English house called on me at Belfast for a large quantity (1,000 pieces) of a given article. It was not one we were in the habit of making, but we said we were willing to take the order, and get the work made if you will allow us sufficient time. We named the time required, but the English house required it in a period so short, that we could not undertake it; the firm said they had got a similar order executed in England and Scotland in the same time they had offered us, but which we felt ourselves obliged to decline. One reason why we could not execute the order was the length of time our weavers keep their work out after drawing it from the manufacturer. It is well known that it has been a practice (not so much with town weavers as with the country ones), to draw two webs at once from different masters. This does not arise from the Irishman being more desirous of doing wrong than the Englishman or Scotchman, but I believe from the system pursued by many of our masters, who in good times will offer to advance money to the weavers to induce them to accept their work, though at the same time they have other work in hand for other masters. It was not in every case advances of money were made. Sometime before the capital of the Scotch manufacturers was as extensively employed in this country as it is now, the weavers here were very frequently out of employment, and they did not think they were greatly erring in getting hold of two webs at once when they could do so. I am satisfied our weavers have been much better employed since we have had the competition with the English and Scotch, and I believe that the improved employment arises solely from this introduction of British capital.

Some

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Some Irish capital may have been thrown out of the market, but not to the extent which has been introduced by the British. There are reasons why our weavers cannot do their work in the same period as the English and Scotch; first, they usually have worse machinery, that is, looms, and much worse workshops. The workshops are their own dwelling-houses usually; besides, our country weavers have generally small pieces of ground, and are half weavers and half farmers. These holdings of lands vary from one to four acres each. Others not having ground themselves, are compelled at certain seasons to work for their landlords. Many pay their rent in this way; that is, render the landlord a prescribed quantity of labour when called upon. In scarce periods farmers will supply the weavers with potatoes and meal, and not then take any money, but agree to receive in return a certain quantity of labour at the period he would desire it. All this detains the manufacturer's cloth in the progress of weaving it, and is detrimental to the interests of our trade. I dwell on this, that those living at a distance should know our real position as manufacturers, and not think we stand in the same position as the English and Scotch manufacturers.

The circumstances under which the condition of the Irish cotton weaver is depressed, by causes which he cannot control, were thus set forth by Mr. *Moncrieff*:—

Among the disadvantages under which the Irish manufacturers labour are, the want of capital. They want capital as individuals, and also what I may call concentrated capital and industry. In the north of England I see ordinarily many partners in large manufacturing establishments, consequently they bring their combined energies to bear upon the several departments they respectively conduct or superintend, in a manner which none of our small establishments can do. I should think if all the capital of the whole of the manufacturers in Belfast was combined, it would not equal the capital employed by one large establishment in England. The consequence is, that we cannot compete with them. Here also all the manufacturers make very nearly the same sort of goods. When a customer comes over with ready money, they are all anxious to serve him, and competing with one another to secure his custom; he therefore gets his goods at a very low price, leaving perhaps little, if any, profit to the manufacturer. There are also made too many articles. Making so many as they do, they can neither produce the quantity of any given sort, or of so good quality, as English or Scotch houses, which mostly confine themselves to one or two fabrics; this necessarily deters customers from coming to our market. The English and Scotch are also much more original than we are; they are always endeavouring to find out new markets, or invent new fabrics. We run one against the other, in the old way, for years together, and none of us in consequence do much good. We are also in want of a good market. It is not worth while for English or Scotch houses to come here; only a few Irish houses come and do business at Belfast. The want of customers is not our only evil; our customers state the finish and bleaching of the English and Scotch goods to be greatly superior to ours. I have heard it stated that we can make a mule, a muslin between a book and a jacconet, as well or better than in other countries. A bleacher cannot deceive the eye in this; and having the wages lower, and yarn, if bought for cash, about five per cent. only above the English prices, we do compete in this one branch of manufacture. Some of our tape checks are preferred, and we equal the Scotch in our harness or imitation shawls. The Scotch beat us in books, lappets, and fancy handkerchiefs; the finish there is better. The jacconet trade has entirely left us. The book-muslins are now wove generally in Scotland, by dandy looms, in shops, and produced quicker and better than we can.

Formerly we had a number of printers of goods here, but the great majority of them have failed, and are gone away. They could neither produce the richness of colour or the variety that the Scotch and English did. This has again greatly reduced the number of our customers. We have scarcely a printer here at all; Grimshaws have given it up, and the Messrs. Batts and all the leading houses.

Another reason which deters customers from coming here, is the absence in our market of those goods called jobbed goods. These are fancy articles, which have gone out of fashion in England, but which are afterwards bought at a cheap rate for exportation: we have no establishments here of this sort. A merchant

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merchant going to Glasgow or Manchester would get any quantity of any sorts of goods he could desire.

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Mr. *James Kennedy*, speaking on this subject, says:—Another reason of the low rate of wages is the competition between the British and the Foreign manufacturers. We have also to compete here with the English and Scotch manufacturers, men of large capitals, better knowledge of the business, and possessing the advantage of buying cheaper yarn, and having a ready market for selling their goods. An English manufacturer, with a capital of 100,000 *l.*, perhaps, will be able to give longer credit than we can afford to do, and is also able to keep up a larger assortment in his stock of goods. He has consequently the advantages derivable for purchasing yarn largely, over those who buy in smaller quantities. I will suppose a buyer from America comes to Manchester with a sum of 1,000 *l.* He requires an assortment of different kinds of goods, silks, worsteds, hosiery's, muslins, &c. He wants, perhaps, only 100 *l.* worth of muslins, the only article he could get in Belfast, but the other 900 *l.* he intends to lay out in goods in the Manchester market. To pay his expenses from Manchester here would be, say 10 *l.* This would be 10 per cent. on the amount of his purchase, besides the inconvenience of travelling. He naturally concludes to stop where he is, though he is perhaps compelled to pay more for his one article of muslins at Manchester than he would have done had he come to Belfast. It is possible, also, that if he came here, he might not have found the goods he wanted ready made. The stock of goods kept here is usually small, arising from the smallness of the manufacturer's capital (rarely exceeding 2,000 *l.* or 3,000 *l.*), and the limited extent of the demand. The British manufacturers have also much greater choice in the yarn market than the Irish manufacturer has through the agent.

Mr. *James Frazer* says:—I do not consider the work done here as equal to that done in Scotland with the same materials, and the amount of fines would not compensate for the difference in the quality of the workmanship. The houses in Ireland are not so well adapted for the loom as those in Scotland, nor is their machinery so good; many of the weavers here have very wretched houses for the purposes of their trade, nor do they stick to it so regularly as in Scotland. My country weavers have sometimes told me, as an excuse for not bringing home their work within the specified time, that they have had to give a certain amount of labour to pay their rent. I have no doubt of this being true. We have sometimes found large houses paying above us, and in those cases been compelled to come up to their scale; but we have rarely taken the Irish houses as a rule. I think the quality of hand-loom labour has improved in this country since I first knew it, and that this has arisen from the regularity with which the weavers have been supplied with work from the Scotch houses. When wages are very low, the coarser sorts of work are better done; but this arises, I think, from the better sort of hands in such times being obliged to resort to this work. We do no not make many abatements for deficiency of weft, nor do we complain of embezzlement; the calculation is so closely made, that there cannot be much embezzlement. I do not see that Government could enact any laws to improve trade, or the condition of the weaver.

The deficiency of count in the yarn, which formed a frequent cause of complaint in every English district, I also found extensively complained of at Belfast. On this subject I examined two of the principal spinners, whose evidence was as follows:

James Campbell, esq., examined.—I am a spinner of cotton and linen-yarn at Belfast; I spin by steam power; I employ about 650 to 700 hands; none under 13 years of age. I have heard the evidence in which it is stated that the weaver often gets spun-yarn, and that a skein which should be 54 inches in circumference, is often but 52, and that it has a less number of threads than stated. In that way it is assumed the weaver may be defrauded. It is also urged that this decrease may be made in combination between the spinner and manufacturer to cheat the weaver. I am decidedly of opinion, it neither is nor could be the case. I should not have thought it worth while to cross the street to answer such a charge. In the first place, we must begin by supposing the spinner to be a dishonest character, and he would besides subject himself to the

obloquy

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obloquy of all his hands. They know the lengths and counts he should put in as well as the master does. The yarn when made up, must, as a matter of course, be sold for less than the current price of the market; then the manufacturer could not be the purchaser without having a suspicion of something being wrong, and if he were an honest man he would of course turn his attention to ascertain whether it was a fair count or not; if he found it was not, he would come upon the spinner for redress, and give out more to the weaver. If both spinner and manufacturer were dishonest, as the latter gives out the same proportion of weft to each weaver he employs, every weaver would fall short in quantity, and all would complain. It could not be confined to an individual case. The standard length of the yarn is 54 inches; all honest men buy and sell by that standard; if a manufacturer was disposed to buy yarn under that length, the spinner must have a distinct set of reels to enable him to supply such an order; he could not have this without its being known throughout his establishment; it is very improbable it would be kept a secret if so known; if known, no man could carry on business who was guilty of such conduct; a weaver might drop threads and lessen the count, but to guard against this, we have a quadrant for sizing (measuring) every 10 skeins; a spinner must know if it was over or under weight, and he would immediately remedy it, by adding or subtracting from the count; there are no very little spinners, and none that would carry on a trade of making false count yarn; it would be impossible that such persons should not be exposed by their workmen. (Witness delivered the following statement of the average earnings of his hands.)

The Flax and Cotton Mills of James Boomer & Co., Belfast, 15 September 1838.

	Male.	Female.	Total.
Number of hands employed	248	417	665
How many adults in each sex, say 18 years and upwards	103	187	290
How many under 18 years	145	230	375

Average weekly earnings of male adults	21/
Ditto ditto of female adults	6/
Ditto ditto of male young persons	4/
Ditto ditto of female ditto	4/

If possible, how many hands are the children of hand-loom weavers - - 152

James Campbell, Managing Partner.

Robert Lipper, esq.—I am a spinner of cotton yarn in Belfast; I have never made any alteration in our reels for any particular manufacturers, or ever made any yarn short of the standard length and count; I am not aware of any other manufacturer doing so, or having done so; I never heard such a charge before; we must give weight in yarn; if we give short length, we must give proportionate weight. The coarser the yarn is, the greater quantity is turned off, and we should gain no advantage by supplying short numbers, but the difference we should save in wages between the price we pay for spinning the two numbers; this would not be the hundredth part of the apparent value of the yarn, not the eighth of a penny. In reference to reeled yarn, we make our bundles up in 5 lbs. and in 10 lbs. bundles; if we have 5 lbs. of 30's, and make up a bundle less than 5 lbs., they will not be the numbers (30's), but only 24's or 26's, or whatever is the deficiency in weight, and the price will be less in proportion, so that it makes little difference to a spinner whether a bundle be 4 lbs. or 6 lbs.; he has no inducement whatever to sell short either in count or length; all spinners test their reelers by a small reel they keep in their office, and having no interest in false reeling, as I have shown, we should detect and discharge any careless or fraudulent reeler. We have but 10 cotton spinners in Belfast and the neighbourhood; we have about 500 hands; no spinner has as few as 100 hands. If any had reels under the standard, the reelers must know it, and it could not be kept a secret. There are less cotton spinning establishments now than there were four years ago in Belfast; many then spinning cotton, have now turned to spinning flax; about five I think have so changed.

As a mode of relief, the establishment of boards of trade to regulate and equalize wages, the repeal of the corn laws, the prohibition of females as hand-loom weavers, and the previous service of an indentured apprenticeship, by male weavers, were named. The latter appeared to be the method of relief most generally favoured. On this subject,

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Mr. *William Hayling*, a manufacturer, says:—A regulation that no man should henceforth serve as a weaver, without serving an apprenticeship, would be a great benefit to both masters and men; it would reduce the number of both, and be beneficial to each. I think the weavers' present means prevent their finding their children employment otherwise than at the loom, as they must serve an apprenticeship to most other trades. They cannot maintain their children during the term of apprenticeship. If funds were placed under certain regulations for the apprenticeship of the children to other trades, it would be a most desirable object.

James Parke, a weaver, states:—Another thing very injurious is, that the trade was too easily got at, and still is. A man would take a lifetime to make a good weaver, but he would get a partial knowledge in a short time so as to enable him to get a living. He would be perhaps a bad hand, and would produce bad work, which would be injurious to the manufacturer. We have still too many in the trade. In the years 1803 and 1804, the practice of apprenticing to weavers existed; they were usually bound for from three to five and seven years. This is still the custom, but the binding is usually now for but three years. Many weavers who have children of their own bring them up to the trade without binding them.

John Campbell says:—I think it would be a great improvement to prevent any new persons from becoming weavers without previously serving an apprenticeship. I think two apprentices would be quite enough for one shop, and that one of them should have served a good part of his time before another was taken on. It was formerly the practice to apprentice to weavers, but there has been no rule for above the last 20 years, and since that time the condition of the weaver has been uniformly getting worse.

Mr. *George Lough*, of Newtown Ardes, agent to Messrs. Kennedy, says:—It would be a great benefit to the weavers to require that all persons should serve an apprenticeship of seven years before commencing to act as weavers; this would give better work, and better prices, and better trade.

Mr. *Henry Crone*, one of the secretaries to the Belfast harness-weavers, says:—I would also require lengthened apprenticeship prior to a man's becoming a weaver. This would ensure better workmanship. I would not make any exception. A weaver's children should be required to be bound even to their own parents. It would be beneficial to limit the number of apprentices; but I am afraid the Legislature would not so far interfere. It frequently happens now that a man, after perhaps eight months' teaching, fancies himself a fair journeyman. He gets out a web as such, and when it is carried home it is badly done, and he is fined for it. This brings bad goods into the market. Five years should be the shortest period of apprenticeship, and persons should not be bound under 14 years of age. A great many apprentices now are not the children of weavers. In Glasgow the short apprenticeship is very common, and the children in the almshouses at Glasgow are usually bound to hand-loom weavers. A person is now frequently taught the trade for a few shillings. I was on an arbitration case lately, where 20*s.* had been paid. Females should be prevented being apprenticed; they would be better wives if taught household duties.

Richard Cahorn, examined, says:—I think the principal cause of distress is the want of a system of apprenticeship; from the want of such a system a number of persons creep into the trade, and get a mere sketch of it; they are ready to go forward to the manufacturer and take any price he is willing to offer them, and then they carry home bad work; this introduces inferior articles into the market, though perhaps made of fine yarn, and it is sold at a low price; prices are thereby reduced, and wages also. The trade is not easily learned, but requires apprenticeship as much as any I know to become expert workmen. A number put their children to it from necessity; they cannot put them to other trades, for want of means and opportunity; he therefore is made a weaver. He will work perhaps for a year, by which time he may get into evil company, and get his manners corrupted; perhaps he leaves his parents, and, with his little learning and practice of one year, he sets to work for himself, and gets just enough to maintain him. Apprenticeship would obviate this.

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Mr. *James Macintosh*, agent to Messrs. Penny & Co., of Glasgow, states:—Weaving is much too easily got at, and apprenticeship would be a great advantage to the trade. It might be a hardship individually, occasionally, but would be an advantage to the manufacturer as well as the workmen. If the numbers of workmen were lessened, it would no doubt raise wages, but that would be beneficial. Higher prices would follow, and that would be as good for the manufacturer as the workmen. We should get better workmen, and could afford to pay them better. It would be arbitrary to make limitations to the number of apprentices a master weaver should take, though that is common in other trades. I think five years would be the best period to fix for the apprenticeship.

The embezzlement of weft, and the extent of the traffic in stolen materials existing in Belfast, was stated to be much greater than in any town I visited, either in England or Ireland. On this subject,

Mr. *Harling*, a manufacturer, says:—A number of small manufacturers buy warps in a regular way, and I would suppose from the prices they sell their goods at, which is much lower than the respectable masters can afford to sell at, that they get their weft improperly. I made an attempt sometime ago to prevent traffic of this sort, but I found the leaning of the bench towards these parties was such, that unless I took more trouble, and went to greater expense than I was prepared to do, I must give it up. The bench required very distinct proofs; those I could afford. I prosecuted one case for purchasing embezzled weft; I do not think the weaver was aware of it. I told the weaver's wife I had her husband in custody for making away with my weft, and that if she would tell me who he sold it to, I would let him off. She told me the name of the person who bought it, and he was convicted in the penalty of 5*l.* Another weaver whom I found deficient in his weft, denied it, and he set a trap to find out what became of it, and detected one of his own children, who stole it and bartered it for bread. I believe the practice goes on to an immense extent. *I believe I am correct in stating that two-thirds of the entire goods sold in the Belfast warehouses, for the immediate home trade, are the produce of weft so obtained.* This has the most injurious effects on prices, and on the wages of the weavers. I impute nothing personal to any particular individual establishments, but I have founded my opinion on the fact that many houses in this town do not usually go to the respectable merchants, but purchase goods of low commission agents. Persons bring in goods to these small agents, and lodge them in their hands; if they sell them well, they charge 6*d.* a piece commission; if not sold, no charge is made. Saturday evening is a great day for disposing of these goods. If during the day the warehousemen have been holding off purchasing, they will frequently effect purchases at very low rates. These purchases are all made for ready money. This practice has been carried on to an extent to be generally complained of by respectable houses, so much so, that at one time I made an attempt to put an end to it, by going as far as the law of libel would let me go in exposing the system. It was not then carried on to the extent it is now; but I regarded it as a growing evil, and so it has proved. I think a good deal of the weft so used is imported into Belfast. A good deal of the coloured yarns are brought, I am told, from Carlisle here. There are people here who have depôts for this yarn, and have always quantities on hand. Blue Bell-entry is a famed place for this sort of merchandise.

Mr. *Robert Smith*, foreman to Mr. Moncrieff, says:—Shawls were a tolerable trade here last winter, but at the present time they are made to such an extent out of yarn, which is embezzled or stolen in some way, that the respectable houses have been driven out of the trade; much of this yarn comes from Scotland, Carlisle, and other places. Many of the houses who use this yarn, put out at Lisburn, Newton Ardes, and other places. In brisk times they will pay the weaver as much as the established houses, but not in slack times. It often comes sorted in numbers, and sometimes not. These houses will bring the goods into the market at prices much below what they can be made by the respectable houses, and therefore bring down not only prices but weavers' wages also. I consider at least 200 houses use this yarn in Belfast, and within a circuit of eight miles, and they will have from two to twenty looms each, and some of them even more. All these transactions are for ready money. These goods are sold to general wholesale houses in the town, and occasionally to men who export them. I think the houses who buy them must know they are improperly made.

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Mr. William M'Connell, of Donegal-street, used to buy a good deal of these sort of goods from such persons; but for the last four or six years, he has not bought any goods without requiring previous proof of their being fairly made. In addition to the shawls, these dealers make plain goods, such as lawns, jaconets, and mulls, tape checks, &c., in great quantities, and I am satisfied that the inferior quality of the goods they make has very much injured the character of the Irish manufacture, both in Scotland and England. Eight or ten years ago, attempts were made to put down this trade, by two manufacturers named Howe and Mulholland. They took constables, and went to the houses of all the people suspected of dealing in this sort of yarn, and took the yarns they found to the police-office, and required the owners to come the next day and show their invoices. They could not do so, and lost their stock, and were fined 5 *l.* each. It did not put it down effectually; on the contrary, it has been increasing, and I am satisfied it is carried on to a very great extent now, but perhaps not quite so great as a year ago; that is, in the shawls: in the plain goods it is as much as ever. It holds out most dreadful inducements to theft. A child may sell even a copt for a halfpenny baff (a bun). Two or three copts will get an old woman a dish of tea. It is always a sure market; never asked where it comes from, or how it is got.

The same witness adds:—I think if the system I have exposed could be put down, and an uniform rate of wages established, at least in this country, it would be of all plans the best to relieve the condition of the weavers. In slack times, especially, the weavers' wages are reduced just as the manufacturer thinks proper; they must take whatever they can get, or starve. *When work is given out to weavers in the country, it is very rarely they would take such a liberty as ask what rate of wages they were to be paid.* The plan I would recommend to establish an uniform rate of wages is, that a certain number of the manufacturers and a certain number of weavers should agree upon a rate, which should be binding. I would have the masters chosen by the weavers, because they know best from experience those who lay the heaviest hands on them. The weavers might be chosen by the masters; and I do not think they then would object to it. I know, as you say, attempts would be made to vary the fabrics, so as to bring them out of the board scale prices. I would obviate this, by giving the board judicial power in disputed cases to fix under what class any particular fabric should come.

Henry Crone, a weaver, says:—*I know great quantities are embezzled. I worked once for two years and a half for a master, every bit of whose yarn was embezzled; that is, all the wefts.* The manner in which it was procured was by an old woman who trafficked among the agents, or putters-out, in Ayrshire. I also know intimately a person who made a purchase from the warper of a manufacturer in Glasgow to the amount of 100 spangles.

Mr. *William Moorcroft*, manufacturer, says:—The practice adverted to yesterday, of a great part of the town-trade being carried on by improperly-obtained yarn, is well known, and regarded as a great evil, but to what extent it is carried I cannot say. I know one instance of a person in the country trade who, about five years ago, bought of me about one-fourth of what he bought in this town, and kept this rate of purchasing up for two or three years; since that I have frequently seen him, but he has not purchased a single piece of me. He gives me as a reason that he can buy cheaper in other places in Belfast than he can of me; I know that now he does not purchase of regular manufacturers, and he has convinced me that he can buy them cheaper than I can make them, much less afford to sell them. I am not in the shawl manufacture, but I have heard many of the respectable shawl manufacturers say, that shawls are sold in this market, made here, which are sold cheaper than they can make them; their trade is injured in consequence. Whether any of this yarn is put into coarse fabrics for the export trade, I cannot say. Though all recognize the existence of the illegal trade, and all the respectable masters feel its injurious effects, no efforts have been made to put it down.

Mr. *George Lough*, of Newtown Ardes, says:—The only law against these people is, that if the yarn they sold could be proved to have been stolen, and be identified, which is impossible, from much of it being mixed together, the vendor would be liable to no other punishment than paying three times the value of the yarn so identified.

Before

Before I commenced manufacturing for Mr. Kennedy I manufactured for myself. I used to buy this sort of yarn freely from these dealers. I never asked any questions, but bought what I wanted, and thought no harm of it. I afterwards considered it wrong, and saw the evils of the system, and abandoned it. I gained twice as much by buying my yarn in that way than I have got since by manufacturing for Mr. Kennedy. A good deal of embezzlement goes on in this country, as well as stolen yarn being imported. I do not think the weaver would embezzle, as his weft would run short, and he would be stopped for it. But while these shops are open to all, his children or his apprentices have each a temptation to rob him in small quantities, which they cannot resist.

On this and other subjects I examined Walter Malony, Esq., the Stipendiary Magistrate, at considerable length. I subjoin his evidence entire.

Walter Malony, esq., examined.—I am the resident magistrate for the Belfast district, and a magistrate of all the adjoining counties to that in which I act. The district is a hand-loom weaving district. I am often applied to as chairman of the petty sessions bench in this town to adjudicate on disputes between the workpeople and their employers. The most frequent cause of complaint is the deductions made from the workpeople's wages by their employers, which the workmen maintain are unjustly made. They appeal to me generally in such cases under the General Wages Act, 54 Geo. 3, c. 116, which gives the magistrate power of awarding wages not exceeding 6 *l.* Irish. The employers when summoned on such occasions usually claim an arbitration under the Act 5 Geo. 4, c. 96. I am necessitated to grant this arbitration when applied to by either party, as employers generally allege insufficiency of work or bad workmanship. I consider the machinery of the Arbitration Act very clumsy, and I think either party if inclined can cause a great deal of delay. I will thoroughly point that out. We will assume that a weaver living at Hillsborough has taken out a web at Belfast. On bringing it in, an objection is made, perhaps, that it is not woven according to agreement, and deductions are made. The weaver has then to get a magistrate and seek a summons. The hearing of the case is on the third day at farthest under the Arbitration Act, but this Act is not always resorted to. The hearing brings the man again all the way from Hillsborough to attend the hearing in Belfast. If the master is so inclined, (I do not say they are always or generally so,) he may say that he is not exactly prepared with his witnesses on that day, or some such excuse; a future day is named usually, and always so when the employer prepares an affidavit stating the absence of a material witness. On that day it is found that the magistrates cannot judge of the case, as the facts are connected altogether with the peculiarities of the trade. Then the Arbitration Act is resorted to. The means pointed out by the Act is, that the magistrates shall name not less than four, nor more than six persons, one-half of whom shall be masters and freemen, and the other half workpeople. From this nomination each party chooses one as arbitrator—the master from the masters, and the workpeople from the workpeople. The arbitration should take place within 48 hours, but from some reason or another, I have scarcely ever known it done within that time. The usual causes of delay are, 1st, that the two persons appointed may, either one or the other, not like to lose their time by carrying the arbitration into effect, it not being compulsory on them to serve. They usually award themselves remuneration in the costs. If either party has an object in causing delay, the place appointed may be inconvenient, or the person may be influenced not to attend. I am putting an extreme case, not one that I know to have occurred, but as one that may occur. After following these two arbitrators for some time, and endeavouring to get them to meet, perhaps they will, one or both of them, refuse to act, and the parties are again obliged to have recourse to the magistrate. All this time the subject in dispute may not be above 1 *s.* or 1 *s.* 6 *d.*, or a mere trifle. The magistrate is then, when again applied to, empowered to appoint one or two fresh persons in the place of the defaulter or defaulters as new referees. They are to meet in 24 hours, but nothing is compulsory. There is nothing to oblige or force them to meet. The reference then ends in one of two ways; either by appeal to the quarter session under the Wages Act, the original proceedings having been commenced under that Act, or that the two referees hand in two separate decisions and arbitrations, as there is no power under the Arbitration Act to call in an umpire. In case of this

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this disagreement arising, the magistrate becomes the umpire, and then becomes, what the law in the first case said he was unable to be, the umpire, and matters are then placed in the exact position in which they began. This will show the great hardship which may arise, and the heavy expense by loss of time which must arise to a labourer living at Hillsborough, while his case is all the time going on at Belfast.

As a remedy for this I would recommend, that the Arbitration Act be simplified, by allowing a weaver to choose one arbitrator, the masters another, and the magistrates a third. Each party would choose a person that they knew would act; the only difficulty would, perhaps, be with the person selected by the justices. He should be a person familiar with the trade which was the subject of dispute. It would be necessary to make his attendance compulsory, and it might be expedient to allow him remuneration for his attendance. In a case the other day, the weaver's arbitrator fixed the costs at 1*l.* 2*s.* 6*d.*, and the master's at 5*s.* 9*d.* The magistrates had to decide between them.

The above cases do not apply to the Linen Act as it now stands. The Linen Act applies to the cotton trade only from the 27th section. There the words "cotton-yarn" are introduced, which in some measure applies it to that branch of trade. Under this section, "any persons selling, pawning, or embezzling any kind of yarn, tools, or apparatus, &c. with which they are entrusted, are liable to a penalty of three times the value of the same." In the recovery of that penalty, the greater the amount of robbery a manufacturer sustains the greater is the difficulty of obtaining punishment of the individual robbing him. Any sum under 5*l.* is recoverable in a summary manner before the magistrate. If between 5*l.* and 20*l.*, the proceeding must be by civil bill. If 5*l.* cannot be levied, there is an alternative punishment of a month's imprisonment; but, if the 5*l.* is exceeded, and there are no goods to distrain upon, there is no alternative punishment by imprisonment. If the amount of robbery or embezzlement exceed 20*l.*, the cause can only be determined in the superior courts in Dublin. The same section of the Act applies also to the receiver of this property so stolen. I have heard it frequently alleged in Belfast, that a great traffic is carried on in stolen yarn; but the difficulty of putting it down is, that it is next to impossible to identify the yarn so stolen. A man who has been robbed may know very well where his yarn has been carried, but the owner would not take upon himself to swear that the yarn was his; you might as well expect a man to swear to potatoes. As to a man being required to prove how he got possession of yarn alleged to be stolen, there is a precedent under Mr. Peel's Act (the Timber Act), whereby a man, having fresh timber in his possession, is compelled to show how he became possessed of it.

If a person made oath that he had been robbed of yarn, and that he suspected a particular individual to be in possession of it, I would think, if the magistrate granted a search-warrant, and yarn was found in the possession of this individual, answering in quality and quantity to that stolen, that he might be required, without unfair interference with the liberty of the subject, to show how he came into possession of it. Manufacturers have frequently complained to me of weavers making their cloth thin, and not putting in all the weft given them. I think that is sufficiently met by the power vested in magistrates to deduct or stop wages. A great number of employers do not give out tickets with their work; the Arbitration Act makes their doing so optional, which I consider quite defective. Almost half the disputes which arise would be easily settled if tickets were given out with all the work, expressive of the terms of the contract; in nine cases out of ten which come before us there is no ticket given.

I have been engaged, with others, in framing an amendment of the laws between employers and weavers. Last winter there was a meeting of the master manufacturers, for the purpose of improving the Linen Act, which was about to expire. The chairman of the meeting, Mr. Ferguson, gave me the amended Act they had suggested for adoption, requesting me to make such remarks as I thought proper upon each of its clauses. I found it so totally objectionable, that I thought the best course was to re-write almost every section of it. The penalties were entirely disproportionate to the offences; and there was nearly a total absence of reciprocal clauses, as regarded the masters. While occupied in this matter, a document was put in my hands by the police, showing that an aggregate meeting of the weavers was about to be called in reference to this Bill, they not having had any voice whatever in framing the measure originated

and

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and suggested for adoption by the masters. They were not permitted to attend the masters' meetings. I laid the document before my brother magistrates, and we agreed to send for some of the leading weavers in the trade. On doing so, and explaining to the men that we thought it objectionable to raise excitement by a public meeting, the men, in a very praiseworthy manner, fell into our views, and expressed that they should be perfectly satisfied if the magistrates would step in between them, and arrange matters. A general meeting of the magistrates of Belfast, and all the surrounding districts, was summoned; there was a very large attendance. At this meeting the Bill, as prepared by the manufacturers, was submitted, and was, without a dissentient voice among the whole of the magistrates present, declared to be highly objectionable in almost the whole of its clauses.

The Bill, as altered by me, was also submitted to them, when they appointed a committee from their own body to consider it, and make such alterations as might be deemed advisable. The committee were: Mr. Sharman Crawford; Mr. Smith, of Lisburne, the present high sheriff; Mr. Boyd, president of the chamber of commerce; the Sovereign of Belfast, and myself. The manufacturers and the weavers were also requested to nominate each a committee from their own body, to confer with the magistrates' committee, and finally, to draw up such a Bill as would be satisfactory to all parties.

After several conferences and meetings this Bill was the result:

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Bill amended by the Manufacturers and Operatives, before a Meeting of Magistrates held at *Belfast*, on the 19th and 20th February 1838.

Whereas by an Act passed in the fifth and sixth years of the reign of his late Majesty King William IV., intituled, "An Act to continue and amend certain regulations for the Linen and Hempen Manufactures in Ireland;" certain penalties and forfeitures are imposed on persons for offences committed against the directions of said Act.

Section 1. And whereas the provisions of said Act are found to be defective, and in many respects inapplicable for the regulation of the cotton and muslin manufacture, and it is deemed necessary and expedient that the said recited Act should be repealed in all its provisions relative to the same, and other provisions made in lieu thereof: Be it therefore enacted, by the Queen's Most Excellent Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, and Commons, in this present Parliament assembled, and by the authority of the same, that the said recited Act of the 5th and 6th years of his late Majesty, and all and every the provisions, powers, penalties, matters and things therein contained, relative to the regulation of the cotton and muslin manufacture, shall be, and the same are hereby repealed.

2. And be it further enacted, by the authority aforesaid, from and after the passing of this Act, that if any person actually retained or employed, by written agreement, for any space of time, as an artificer, worker, servant or labourer, in any of the various branches of the cotton or muslin manufacture, shall at any time after the passing of this Act refuse to work, or shall depart from his or her service without leave, before the end of the term or time for which he or she is or shall be hired or retained, or shall return his or her work before the same shall be completely finished, without the consent of the person or persons by whom he or she shall be employed or retained, unless it be for some reasonable or sufficient cause, to be allowed by two or more justices of the peace, in their respective jurisdictions, then in every such case every person so offending, being thereof lawfully convicted before two or more justices of the peace as aforesaid, shall forfeit and pay any sum not exceeding 5*l.*

3. Provided always, and be it enacted, that if the person or persons so employing or retaining any such artificer, worker, servant or labourer, shall not from time to time constantly furnish and supply him or her with proper materials for finishing his or her work, and shall not from time to time, and at the periods mentioned in said written agreement, pay and discharge all such wages and hire, as the same shall become due to any such artificer, workman, servant or labourer, so retained or employed as aforesaid, such want of materials or non-payment of wages being first lawfully proved, in every such case such artificer, workman, servant or labourer, shall not be liable to the penalties incurred for departing from his service, or quitting or returning his work unfinished as aforesaid, and shall be awarded by the justices before whom the complaint has been heard, such fair and reasonable remuneration for any loss that he may have sustained by the withholding of said materials, or the non-fulfilment of the part of the said written agreement, by the person or persons so employing him; said remuneration, together with the costs of recovering and levying same, to be levied by distress and sale of the goods and chattels of said employer or employers.

4. And be it further enacted, that with all webs and materials given out by a manufacturer or agent, to a worker to be woven, there shall be delivered a note or ticket of particulars

ticulars, signed by such manufacturer or his agent delivering out the same, stating the length, breadth and description of said web so delivered out, and the manner in which the said work, &c. is to be performed, the time within which said work is to be done, and the price agreed on for executing such work in a workmanlike manner, and a duplicate of every such note or ticket shall be made and kept by the master or agent delivering the same, which said note or ticket, or duplicate, in the event of dispute between a manufacturer and worker, shall be evidence of all matters and things mentioned therein, or respecting the same.

5. And be it further enacted, that if any manufacturer or agent shall at any time issue to any weaver or person, yarns of numbers not the same as those mentioned to him or her on delivery of same, and that arbitrators duly appointed under the provisions of an Act passed in the 5th year of the reign of King George IV., shall certify to the best of their belief, that such issue had been made with a fraudulent or injurious intention, every person so offending, on conviction thereof before two or more justices of the peace, shall forfeit and pay for every such offence, any sum not exceeding 5*l.*

6. And be it further enacted, that if any manufacturer or agent employing or retaining any weaver or person, shall not from time to time, on the regular and appointed days and hours of attendance, pay and discharge all wages and hire, as the same shall become due, on any piece or number of pieces returned in a finished state, by any such weaver or person, such weaver or person may summon such manufacturer or agent before the court of petty sessions of the district where said manufacturer or agent issues out his work, and the justices presiding may hear and determine such complaint, and order immediate payment of the sum found due, together with costs for loss of time, and of recovering the same, and in default of immediate payment, shall issue their warrant to levy the same by distress and sale of the goods and chattles of said manufacturer or agent; and the said justices, if they shall think fit, may also authorise such weaver or person to return his work unfinished, in which case such weaver or person shall not be liable to the penalties awarded by the 8th section of this Act.

7. And be it further enacted, that every manufacturer or agent refusing or neglecting to give a note or ticket in the manner hereby prescribed, when required so to do, or not producing a duplicate of same, as before required, when preferring a complaint against any weaver or person to whom goods have been delivered out, shall be deprived of any remedy he might be otherwise entitled to under this Act, for the recovery of any property so delivered out, or for the punishment of any offender or offenders, against any of the provisions thereof in any matter or thing relating to said property so delivered out without a ticket.

8. And be it further enacted, that any weaver or person who shall not finish and return all cloths, &c. &c., or weave all sound and sufficient linen yarn and hempen yarn and cotton yarn to him delivered to be woven, within the time stated in the ticket, unless prevented by sickness or some other reasonable cause, and in such manner, or in such reeds, and into cloths of such breadths, as shall be agreed upon between the owner or owners of such cloths or yarn, or his or their agents, and such weaver or person as specified in the ticket to be delivered with the goods, shall, on conviction thereof, before two or more justices of the peace, forfeit and pay any sum not exceeding 2*l.*

9. And be it further enacted, that if any person entrusted with any cloths, or linen yarn, or hempen yarn, or cotton yarn, or any one or more of those materials mixed with each other, or any tools, materials, or apparatus for manufacturing the same, shall fraudulently sell, pawn, illegally make away with, or embezzle, as hereafter defined, any such cloths or linen yarn, hempen yarn, or cotton yarn, or each or any of them respectively, or such tools, materials, or apparatus, every such offender on conviction thereof, before two or more justices of the peace, shall forfeit the value of the same, together with such penalty, not exceeding 5*l.*, as to such justices shall seem fit, and every person who shall knowingly receive, purchase, or take in pawn any of same, or aid, abet, counsel, or procure the commission of any of said offences, shall, on conviction thereof, forfeit for the first offence 5*l.*, for the second offence 10*l.*, and for every subsequent offence 20*l.*

10. And be it further enacted, that in case any weaver or person who shall be entrusted with any cloths, or linen yarn, or hempen yarn, or cotton yarn, any two or more of these materials mixed with each other, or any tools, or materials, or apparatus for manufacturing the same, shall detain any such cloths, yarns, tools, materials, or apparatus, after the expiration of the time allowed for finishing or weaving, and returning same, as specified in the ticket of particulars delivered out with the said goods, it shall and may be lawful for the owner or owners thereof, or any agent or person duly authorised by him or them, to serve any such weaver or person so detaining as aforesaid with a notice under his or their hand, requiring that all such cloths, yarns, tools, materials or apparatus shall be returned to him in a finished state, within 14 days from the date of the service of same; and if any such weaver or person shall refuse or neglect to return, within said time, all such cloths and yarns in a finished state, and all such tools, materials or apparatus, unless it be for some reasonable or sufficient cause, to be allowed by two or more justices of the peace in their respective jurisdictions, such neglect or refusal shall be deemed and taken to be embezzling under this Act.

11. And be it further enacted, that on proof on oath that any cloths or linen yarn, hempen yarn, or cotton yarn, or any two or more of those materials mixed with each other,

or

or any tools, materials or apparatus, have been fraudently sold, pawned, illegally made away with, or embezzled as aforesaid, by the person to whom entrusted for manufacture, it shall and may be lawful for one or more justices of the peace, and he or they are hereby required to issue their warrant without any previous notice, summons or delay, for apprehending such weaver or person, and bring him before such justice or justices; provided always, that in all cases of embezzlement under this Act, it shall be necessary to produce the duplicate of the ticket of particulars issued out with the goods in question, and to give proof on oath that such cloths, yarns, tools, materials or apparatus, have not been delivered up.

12. And be it further enacted, that in case any manufacturer or person duly authorised by him, shall make oath before a justice of the peace, that he has entrusted any cloths, &c. to any weaver or person, and that he has absconded with same, or that he has just cause to suspect and does suspect that such weaver or person is about to abscond with the same, it shall be lawful for such justice, and he is hereby required to issue his warrant to apprehend such weaver or person, and bring him before him or some other justice of the peace; and unless such weaver or person shall forthwith give sufficient security, to be approved by said justice, for the return, in a finished state, of the article or thing so entrusted to him, within the time stated in the ticket of particulars given out with the same; or, if such time has expired, within such time as to such justices shall seem fit, such justice shall, by warrant, order any constable with his assistants to enter the house of such weaver or person, and take possession of such article or thing so delivered to him as aforesaid, and to bring same before said justice, together with the weaver or person aforesaid, when said justice will direct same to be delivered (if a warp, in a sufficient state on the beam and in the heddles) to the manufacturer; and such weaver or person shall be forthwith released; but if such article or thing be not in the house or possession of such weaver or person, or cannot be produced to such constable, such weaver or person is to be detained in custody, unless he shall find good and sufficient bail for his appearance, until he is brought before the next petty sessions of the district, when if said articles are still not forthcoming, he shall be deemed and taken to have embezzled such articles, and shall be liable to the punishment awarded for such offence: Provided always, and be it enacted, that if it shall appear to said court that the manufacturer or person duly authorised or employed by him, had no foundation for suspecting that the weaver or person so entrusted would abscond, and that the charge was made from a malicious, vexatious or improper motive, it shall be lawful for said court to award the said weaver or person such sum of money, not exceeding 10 *l.*, as to such court shall seem fit, which shall be paid by such manufacturer or person as a compensation for the injury done.

13. And be it further enacted, that if any weaver or worker shall make any charge under the provisions of this Act, which shall prove to be without foundation, and made from a malicious, vexatious or improper motive, then in every such case, every person so offending, being thereof lawfully convicted before two or more justices of the peace, shall forfeit and pay any sum not exceeding 6*l.*

14. And be it further enacted, that if any manufacturer or person duly authorised by him, shall come before a justice of the peace and make oath that he has entrusted cloths, yarns, materials, tools or apparatus, to any weaver or person, and that he has just cause to suspect that the same or part thereof have been fraudulently sold, pawned, purloined, illegally made away with, or embezzled, and are in the possession or on the premises of another person, such justice is hereby authorised and required to grant his warrant to search the dwelling-house and premises of such person, in the day time only, and if such property, or any similar property, shall be found therein, to cause the said property to be taken and detained, and shall cause the person or persons in whose possession or on whose premises the same shall be found to be summoned to appear before the next petty sessions of the district in which the dwelling-house or premises aforesaid are situated, and if such manufacturer or person duly authorised by him shall prove his property in the goods aforesaid, or if the person or persons on whose premises said property is found cannot satisfactorily prove that he, she or they came honestly by same, then in every such case every such person shall be liable to the penalty for pawning, selling, embezzling, or receiving, purchasing, and taking in pawn.

15. And be it further enacted, that any person to whom any property shall be offered to be sold, pawned or delivered, if he shall have reasonable cause to suspect that any such offence has been committed on or with respect to such property, is authorised and required to apprehend and forthwith take before a justice of the peace the party offering the same, together with such property; and every peace officer and constable, and every watchman, duly appointed by law, during such time as he shall be on duty, shall and may apprehend, or cause to be apprehended, any person who may be reasonably suspected of having, or carrying, or in anywise conveying, at any time such property suspected to be purloined or embezzled, and the same, together with such person, to convey or carry before the nearest justice of the peace, who is hereby empowered to order his detention until the next sitting day of petty sessions of the district, unless he enters such bail as may be required for his appearance before said court, on any day to be fixed by said justice, and if the person so apprehended offering for sale, pawn or delivery, or conveying any such property as aforesaid, shall not produce before the said court of petty sessions of the district the party duly entitled to dispose of such property from whom he bought or received the same, or some other credible witness, to testify upon oath the sale or delivery of said property, or shall not

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not give an account to the satisfaction of the justices presiding how he came by the same, then the person apprehended shall be deemed and adjudged guilty of an offence under this Act, and shall be liable to the penalties for pawning, selling or embezzling.

16. And be it further enacted, that where any person shall be convicted as above, the justices shall cause the property so found to be deposited in some safe place for any time not exceeding 30 days, and shall order an advertisement to be inserted in one or more of the public newspapers of the town or city nearest to the place where same were found, and shall cause notice to be given, if in a town or city, by some public crier, and by putting up a printed notice on some public place describing such property, and where the same may be applied for, and in case any person shall prove his property therein upon oath, to the satisfaction of the justices of the petty sessions of the district, restitution of such property shall be ordered to the owner thereof, after paying the reasonable costs of removing, depositing, advertising, and giving notice of same; but if before termination of 30 days no claim be made, and ownership proved to such property, the justices presiding at the court of petty sessions of the district shall order such property to be sold, and after deducting the charges aforesaid, with the charges of the sale, the residue arising from same shall be given to one or more public charities of the town or place where the offence shall be tried.

17. And be it enacted, that in every case of conviction under this Act where the sum which shall be forfeited for the property sold, pawned, embezzled, or otherwise fraudulently made away with, or which shall be awarded as a compensation, or which shall be imposed as a penalty by the justices of the peace, together with such wages for loss of time, and the costs, if awarded, which costs and wages such justices is and are hereby authorized to award if they shall think fit, in any case of a conviction under this Act, shall not be paid immediately after the conviction, it shall be lawful for the convicting justices to commit the offender to the common gaol or house of correction, there to be imprisoned only, or to be imprisoned and kept to hard labour, according to the discretion of the justices, for any term not exceeding two calendar months, where the amount of the sum forfeited or awarded as a compensation, or of the penalty imposed, with or without wages, together with the costs, shall not exceed 5 *l.*; and for any term not exceeding four calendar months, where the amount of such forfeiture, award or penalty, with or without wages, together with the costs, shall exceed 5 *l.*, and shall not exceed 10 *l.*; and for any term not exceeding six calendar months, in any other case, the commitment to be determinable in each of the cases aforesaid upon payment of the amount and costs.

18. And with regard to the application of all forfeitures and penalties upon convictions under this Act, be it enacted, that every sum of money which shall be forfeited, as the value of the property stolen, pawned, embezzled, or illegally made away with, such value or amount to be assessed in each case by the convicting justices, and every sum awarded as a compensation under this Act, shall be paid to the party aggrieved, if known, or where the party aggrieved is unknown, such sum or sums shall be paid, under the order of the convicting justices, to any one or more public charities within the county, city, town or place wherein such conviction shall take place, and at least the half of every sum imposed as a penalty shall be paid to the informer in such case, if there be an informer, if not, to be paid as aforesaid to one or more public charities.

19. And be it further enacted, that in all cases of complaint of any offence or offences committed against the provisions contained in this Act, complaint is to be made within six months from the time when same has been discovered, unless the offending party may have, in the meantime, left the country; the court of petty sessions of the district in which the cloths, yarns, materials, tools or apparatus are given out to the weaver or worker, or taken in from him, whether such weaver or worker resides within the district or not, shall have full power and authority, and is hereby required to act when applied to, and hear and determine the same.

20. And for the protection of persons acting in the execution of this Act, be it enacted, that all actions and prosecutions to be commenced against any person for anything done in pursuance of this Act, shall be laid and tried in the county where the fact was or is charged to have been committed, and shall be commenced within six calendar months after the fact committed, and not otherwise, and notice in writing of such action, and of the cause thereof, shall be given to the defendant, one calendar month at least before the commencement of the action, and in any such action the defendant may plead the general issue, or in case of any action of replevin, may avow generally that the goods and chattels in question were taken under and by virtue of this Act, and may give this Act, and the special matter in evidence at the trial to be had thereupon, and no plaintiff shall receive in any such action, if tender of sufficient amends shall have been made before such action brought, or if a sufficient sum of money shall have been paid into court after such action brought by or in behalf of the defendant or avowant, and if a verdict shall pass for the defendant or avowant, or the plaintiff shall become nonsuit, or discontinue any such action after issue joined, or if upon demurrer or otherwise judgment shall be given against the plaintiff, the defendant or avowant shall recover his full costs, as between attorney and client, and have the like remedy for the same as any defendant hath by law in other cases, and that if a verdict shall be given for the plaintiff in any such action, such plaintiff shall not have costs against the defendant unless the judge before whom the trial shall be had shall certify his approbation of the action, and of the verdict obtained thereon.

21. An

21. And be it further enacted, that to prevent the oppression of weavers or workers, the following subjects of dispute arising between masters and workmen, in the cotton or muslin manufacture, may be settled and adjusted by the Act passed in the fifth year of King George 4, intituled, An Act to consolidate and amend the Laws relating to the Arbitration of Disputes between Master and Workman; that is to say, disagreement respecting the price to be paid for work done, or in the course of being done, whether such dispute shall happen or arise between them respecting the payment of wages, as agreed upon, or any injury or damage done or alleged to have been done to the work, or respecting any delay or supposed delay in finishing the work or the not finishing the work, or the not finishing the work in a good and workmanlike manner, or according to any contract, or to bad materials; cases where the workmen are to be employed to work any pattern which shall require them to purchase any new implements of manufacture, or to make any alteration on the old implements for the working thereof, and the masters and workmen cannot agree upon the compensation to be made to such workmen for or in respect thereof; disputes respecting the length, breadth, or quality of pieces of goods or the yarn thereof, or the quantity and quality of the flax, hemp or wool thereof; disputes respecting the wages or compensation to be paid for pieces of goods that are made of any great or extraordinary length or breadth; disputes respecting the manufacture of cravats, shawls, policat, romal, and other handkerchiefs, and the number to be contained in one piece of such handkerchiefs; disputes arising out of, for, or touching the particular trade or manufacture, or contracts relative thereto, which cannot be otherwise mutually adjusted and settled; disputes between masters and workmen engaged in sizing, embroidering or ornamenting goods; but nothing in this Act contained shall authorise such justice or justices to alter or depart from any of the penalties or punishments awarded for any offence committed against this Act, if the offender shall be found guilty of same; or to establish a rate of wages or price of labour, or workmanship, at which the workman shall in future be paid, unless with the mutual consent of both master and workman; provided always, that all complaints by any workman as to bad materials shall be made within three weeks of his receiving the same, and all complaints arising from any other cause shall be made within six days after such complaint shall arise.

22. And be it further enacted, that the conviction for any offence against this Act shall be drawn up in the following form of words, or in any other form of words to the same effect:—

County of Antrim, to wit. } Be it remembered, that on the . day of in the year of our Lord , in the county of (or city, town or place, as the case may be), A. O. is convicted before us, J. P., and S. L., justices of the peace for the said county (or city, &c.), for that he, the said A. O. did (specify the offence, and the time and place when and where the same was committed, as the case may be), and we, the said J. P. and S. L. do adjudge the said A. O. for his said offence, to forfeit and pay (here state the penalty actually imposed, or state the penalty, and also the value of the articles pawned, sold or embezzled, as the case may be), and (in any case where the costs shall be awarded), also to pay the sum of for costs, and in default of immediate payment of the said sum (or sums) to be imprisoned in the (or to be imprisoned in the , and there kept to hard labour,) for the space of , unless the said sum (or sums) shall be sooner paid, and we direct that the sum of (*i. e.* the penalty only) shall be paid to of in the county (or city, town or place, as the case may be) to be by him for them (applied according to the directions of the statute in that case made and provided), or that the said sum of (*i. e.* the penalty only) shall be paid to (&c., as before), and that the said sum (*i. e.* the value of the articles) shall be paid to C. D. (the party aggrieved, unless he is unknown, in which case state that fact, and dispose of the whole like the penalty as before), and (if such justice shall think proper to award the complainant his costs), we order that the said sum of for costs shall be paid to (the complainant).

Given under our hands and seals the day and year first above written.

23. And be it further enacted, that in all cases where by this Act two or more justices of the peace are authorised and required to hear and determine any complaint, one justice shall be competent to receive the original information or complaint, and to issue the summons or warrant requiring the parties to appear before two or more justices of the peace, and after examination upon oath into the merits of said complaint, and the adjudication thereupon, by any such two justices being made, all and every the subsequent proceedings, to enforce obedience thereto, or otherwise, whether respecting the penalty, fine, imprisonment, costs or other matter or thing relating to the offence, may be enforced by either of the said justices.

24. And be it enacted, that in all cases where the sum adjudged to be paid on summary conviction shall exceed 5*l.*, any person who shall think himself aggrieved by any such conviction may appeal to the next court of general or quarter sessions (which shall be holden not less than 12 days after the day of such conviction), for the county or place wherein the cause of complaint shall have arisen, provided that such person shall give to the complainant a notice in writing of such appeal, and of the cause and matter thereof, within

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within three days after such conviction, and seven clear days at the least before such general or quarter sessions, and shall also enter into a recognizance with two sufficient sureties before a justice of the peace, conditioned personally to appear at the said sessions, and to try such appeal, and to abide the judgment of the court thereupon, and to pay such costs as shall be by the court awarded, and upon such notice being given, and such recognizances being entered into, the justices before whom the same shall be entered into shall liberate such person, if in custody, and the court at such sessions shall hear and determine the matter of the appeal, and shall make such order therein, with or without cost to either party, as to the court shall seem meet; and in case of the dismissal of the appeal, or the affirmance of the conviction, the court shall order and adjudge the offender to be punished according to the conviction, and to pay such costs, if any, as shall be awarded, and shall, if necessary, issue process for enforcing such judgment.

25. And be it enacted, that no such conviction, nor any adjudication made in appeal therefrom, shall be quashed for want of form, or be removed by certiorari or otherwise, into any of Her Majesty' superior courts of record, and no warrant of commitment shall be held void by reason of any defect therein, provided it be therein alleged that the party has been convicted, and there be a good and valid conviction to sustain the same.

I was requested to forward the Bill to Lord Morpeth; but, before I did so, I thought it right to take the precaution of getting the authority of as many of the manufacturers and of the weavers as I could do, previously to my taking such a step.

I put in first the letter received from the manufacturers, which, you will see, contains the names of most of the respectable manufacturers.

To the Gentlemen of Bench of Magistrates of the Town and Neighbourhood of Belfast.

Gentlemen, Belfast, 19 February 1838.

The inefficient and ill-defined legal enactments which have hitherto regulated the cotton trade in this town and adjacent districts, have suggested the necessity of making such a revision in the existing law, as will not only render the differences which so frequently arise between manufacturers and weavers of rarer occurrence, but enable you at all times to give those misunderstandings a more complete and satisfactory adjustment. Actuated by this feeling, you have prepared the draft of a Bill, which, on examination at a meeting of manufacturers, has met their general approval.

We beg to acknowledge the courtesy with which you have heard our opinions as to the propriety of altering some of its original clauses, to thank you for the trouble you have taken in preparing it; and we respectfully request that you will now cause the Bill to be forwarded to the proper authorities, in order that it may be presented to the Legislature, with a view to its being passed into law.

We have, &c.

(signed) *John Vance*, jun., *& Co.*
James Hart.
Alexander Moncrieff.
James Kennedy.
William Webb.
H. & J. Reid, jun.
Daniel M'Keown.
John Bell & Alexander Bell.
John Mathews.
Richard Pelling.
Pro *James Bryson, William Bryson.*
Peter Pelling.
Charles Pelling.
Charles O'Neill & Co.
Joseph Calvert & Co.
Wetherald & Swain.
Archibald Rutherford.

The muslin manufacturers' committee also sent me the following:

Belfast, 20 February 1838.

This is to certify, That the muslin manufacturers and weavers have unanimously agreed to the Bill prepared by the magistrates, with the necessary amendments that are now inserted.

(signed) *James Hart.*
James Kennedy.
William Webb.
Alexander Moncrieff.

Walter Malony, Esq., J. P.

I also put in two documents from the weavers, expressive of their approbation of the Bill, as prepared by the magistrates' and the other committees. It was fully and fairly discussed; we met several days on the subject.

To *W. Malony*, Esq.

Sir, Belfast, 23 April 1838.

I beg leave to send you enclosed 400 signatures which I have received from the town of Antrim, praying for you to have the kindness to send forward the Cotton Bill, as agreed upon by the manufacturers and operatives; and so soon as I receive similar documents from

from the other districts, I will be punctual in forwarding them to your honor. Our own requisition is in a state of preparation; when ready, it will be forwarded without delay.

I am, &c.

(signed) *Henry Crone*, Secretary.

To *W. Malony*, Esq., Justice of Peace.

May it please your Honor, Belfast, 1 May 1838.

We, the undersigned operative hand-loom weavers of the borough of Belfast and its vicinity, do earnestly solicit you to have the kindness to send forward to Parliament the Bill, as agreed upon by both employers and workmen, at your earliest convenience, and you will greatly oblige, Sir,

Yours, &c.

(signed)

Henry Crom.
Alexander M'Millan.
James O'Hara.
Joseph Jaek.
James M'Cutchon.
John Kirkpatrick.
John Barry.
John Stewart.
Isaac Bell.
John Jameson.
Richard Morrow.
Francis Logan.
Arthur M'Mahon.
Young Clark.
Thomas Lenaghan.
John Frazer.
Daniel Ritchie.
James M'Keown.
James Mitchell.
John Hamilton.
John Jefferson.
Ralph Jefferson.
Charles Shield.
George Drummond.
John Mulholland.
Thomas Stafford.
Samuel Pollock.
James Shaw.
William Purdy.
Thomas M'Kee.
James Fletcher.

The above Bill, you will observe, has solely reference to the cotton trade. The linen weavers, it was stated, were contented with the Linen Act as it stood, and wished no alteration. I forwarded the Bill, as agreed to, to Lord Morpeth; it was soon after the Easter recess. The answer I received was, that Government thought it would be a difficult matter to pass a new measure at so late a period of the session, and that the most they could look for was to renew the Linen Act as it stood. This they have since done.

All the penalties under the Act, as suggested, have been framed on the same scale as Mr. Peel's Larceny Acts. The masters, some of them, thought the penalties not severe enough. I have no reason to doubt but the Act would be satisfactory to the weavers as a body, and fair towards the manufacturers. I know what has been the general conduct of the working classes of Belfast; taking the weavers as a body, I have never met a more correct body of men, or men more attached to order and regularity. I have witnessed them in seasons of great distress, and they have always maintained the same good character. I think them entitled to any relief the Legislature in its wisdom can grant them.

The most frequent disputes that have come before me have been between the harnesss-weaver and their employers, and have arisen out of the practice, formerly prevalent here, of harness manufacturers advancing their men money, and stipulating to receive payment back at the rate of 1 *d.* out of each shilling earned weekly. When a weaver tendered the full amount of his debt, the employer would not receive it, and the weaver thought he was bound to remain with him. The law on the subject is better understood now; a man knows he can pay his debt whenever he is able. Harness-weavers were scarce when the former system was adopted.

The extent to which the weavers have availed themselves of the savings bank, and the general character they have maintained, as orderly, well-conducted people, will be found detailed in the subjoined evidence from the cashier of the bank, the sovereign of the town, and Sir Robert Bateson, Bart.

Maurice Cross, Esq., examined.—I am cashier of the Belfast Savings' Bank; the bank was established in 1816. I have been connected with it 14 years. It is our present practice to classify the depositors in the bank. I present a classification up to the present date.

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CLASSIFICATION of Depositors in the Belfast Savings' Bank, stating the Number of each Class having Accounts open, 30th September 1838.

1. Male servants	233
2. Female ditto	764
3. Small farmers, gardeners, and agricultural labourers	235
4. Teachers	56
5. Small shopkeepers, publicans, hucksters, and dealers	153
6. Clerks, shopmen, and warehousemen	73
7. Mechanics, artisans, and handicrafts (Fifty-one of these are weavers, mostly all residing in the country, and not depending solely on weaving for support; the remainder, who belong to Belfast, manufacture for themselves: but in no instance, at present, is there an operative having an account open, so far as is known.)	419
8. Labourers	147
9. Mariners, lightermen, &c.	15
10. Soldiers, marines, constabulary, preventice service, revenue, excise, &c.	94
11. Dress-makers, milliners, needle-women, and females employed in factories, &c.	68
12. Children or minors	49
13. Apprentices	12
14. Widows, persons of small income, and householders having no profession or business	759
15. Charitable societies	23
16. Friendly societies	36
17. Trust accounts for children	665
18. Miscellaneous	42
TOTAL	3,843

The 14th class consists principally of householders, not of any particular profession, a considerable number of whom lodge money without the knowledge of their husbands; the reason is obvious: in such cases the husbands are usually persons of dissolute habits. They would generally be found to belong to class 7, "mechanics, artisans, &c." In many cases the wives keep small shops, and the deposit may be the results of their own savings. The total number of weavers who are depositors is but 51; of these, none are mere weavers. They always formed a very small and unimportant class among our depositors. I should assign as a reason for this their ordinary poverty, and the low rate of wages they receive. Agricultural labourers here receive 1*s.* a day. Weavers would not average this, I think, by their earnings. Labourers in the country would not receive as much.

I account for the diminution in the number of the accounts shown now and at November last, by the fact of a great number of small accounts, still open, where the balance may be only a few pence, as interest, have not been included in the classification account made up for June. They are called the "unclaimed interest accounts." It is not that we have less depositors than then; on the contrary, we have more, having opened nearly 1,000 new accounts since the 20th November last, bearing the same character as the return.

The number of charitable societies has increased from 17 to 23, and the friendly societies from 21 to 36. I attribute this increase to a growing desire among the working classes to derive the benefit of such associations. I think there are many defects in the constitution of these societies, arising from want of information among the people on the principles on which they should be conducted, and on the proper mode of management. They usually hold their meetings, and transact their business in public-houses, where a considerable portion of the funds is absorbed in drinking, and to which is often added funds of their own. This practice also promotes, frequently, disunion among them, and unfits them for the discharge of any business. Their calculations are not usually made on any correct and well-ascertained data. I think also they are not altogether free from party spirit. I observe that several of them are composed of persons entertaining similar political opinions; although I am not aware that there is anything in their rules enjoining such results. I have known some of them which have failed, and several have withdrawn their funds from the savings' bank, and dissolved the society. I have also known cases where

where the funds have been fraudulently abstracted from the place in which they were deposited, very greatly to the suffering and injury of the members interested.

I think speedy and decisive measures should be taken to put all these institutions under uniform and safe regulation. Each should be conducted on fixed principles, as far as local circumstances would admit. I am satisfied formerly there was much more distrust of the savings' banks than at present. I have taken some pains to inform the people, especially in the country parishes, of the true nature of these institutions, and have good grounds for believing that I have been instrumental in doing some good.

Previous to the establishment of this savings' bank, the practice prevailed to a considerable extent, of lending money to farmers and others in restricted circumstances, at high rates of interest, six per cent., and in some cases higher, which was not repaid, except at long intervals, and in many cases was totally lost. It is my opinion that this practice is not now of frequent occurrence, and that parties of that description prefer lodging their money in the savings' bank, on account of the superior security, though they receive a less rate of interest. I have observed with great satisfaction that a considerable number of persons who commenced lodging deposits in this bank at its formation, have not finally closed their accounts, and many of them have attained to considerable amounts. They also feel great anxiety to extend similar advantages to their children. We generally find that where the father and mother are depositors, the children, as soon as they become apprentices, or in the receipt of wages, are usually depositors also, thus showing the valuable influence of examples of frugality and prudence.

I have reason to think the temperance societies are exercising great influence. Many of the members of these societies are depositors in our bank, and have stated to me the advantages they have derived from their connexion with these institutions. A man in this town, a pork-cutter by trade, or porter in a pork-store, told me that he and his wife had been for many years in the habit of drinking to excess; that he had got into debt, and pledged the principal articles of his furniture and dress; that about two years since he was induced to enrol himself as a member of a temperance society, since which period he and his wife have totally abstained from ardent spirits. He has been enabled, in consequence, to pay his debts, to redeem his property from the pawnbroker, and to lodge a small portion of his wages, which do not exceed 7*s.* per week, in this savings' bank. The appearance of the man is now respectable.

The advantages of savings' banks have been peculiarly exemplified in seasons of commercial embarrassment, and in periods of peculiar disease, as when the cholera was prevalent. In illustration of the former observation, I have known numbers of depositors, especially females, mothers of large families (and who may have lodged money without the knowledge of their husbands), who have withdrawn their savings for the purpose of supporting the family, and purchasing medicine and comforts in a period of sickness. The disclosure of the fact to their husbands, under such circumstances, has often been attended with beneficial effects. In many cases the husbands themselves have been induced subsequently either to lodge in their own names, or to aid their wives in doing so.

The year ending the 20th November last, was the only year since the formation of the bank in which the payments out exceeded the receipts. In that year they amounted to 30,665*l.* 10*s.*, and the receipts to 27,688*l.* 10*s.* 4*d.* This may be accounted for from the unusual depression last year in the state of business, and the number of persons out of employment; and persons whose lodgments exceeded 100*l.* having withdrawn them to invest their money more profitably in land, &c. The establishment of the Agricultural Bank, holding out peculiar inducements to persons of very small capital to become shareholders, induced a number of depositors in very humble circumstances, such as porters, servants, and errand-boys to draw out their money from the savings' bank to purchase shares in the Agricultural Bank. The whole amount withdrawn for this purpose was considerable, all of which is in jeopardy from the subsequent failure of the bank. The effect of this has been to cause considerable distress among the persons thus circumstanced, and to shake their confidence in the stability of all joint stock banking establishments. Our depositors and the amounts are now again progressively increasing, as evinced by

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Return of R. M. Muggeridge, Esq.

by the following return of our managers for the quarter ending 20th August 1838:—

BELFAST SAVINGS' BANK.

Quarterly Return of the Managers, commencing 21st of May, and ending 20th August 1838.

	£.	s.	d.
This quarter's receipts	8,243	12	10
Repayments	7,134	3	11
Increase on the quarter	1,109	8	11
Balance of last quarter	92,123	13	11
Present Balance £.	93,233	2	10
Lodged in Bank of Ireland, bearing interest	92,749	12	11
Surplus Fund	150	–	–
In hands of treasurer	333	9	11
£.	93,233	2	10

Michael Andrews, Secretary.

The first class of depositors (those under 20*l.*) form the most increasing class, and the larger depositors the most decreasing. I subjoin the classification of amounts published at the last annual return.

No. of Depositors.		Total Amount of each Class.		
		£.	s.	d.
2,610	whose respective balances on the 20th November 1837, including interest, did not exceed 20*l.* each.	14,629	16	4
1,106	ditto, were above 20*l.*, and not exceeding 50*l.*	32,787	2	3
316	ditto, were above 50*l.*, and not exceeding 100*l.*	20,990	18	6
96	ditto, were above 100*l.*, and not exceeding 150*l.*	11,199	2	10
34	were above 150*l.*, and not exceeding 200*l.*	5,800	13	3
7	ditto, exceeding 200*l.*	1,741	16	2
4,169	Total No. of Depositors. £.	87,149	9	4
17	charitable societies	903	18	1
21	friendly societies	986	–	–
4,207	Total £.	89,039	7	5

I have had occasion to observe that depositors are easily alarmed at the interference of the Legislature, as regards their power in altering the rate of interest; and I feel convinced any reduction in the present rate would be attended with the most pernicious results. In one or two instances a run has been made on the bank, when the integrity of her funds has been supposed to be in any degree assailed. At the time of the West India Compensation Bill, it was stated in the newspapers, that the first instalment was to be paid out of the funds in savings' banks; and again, when Mr. O'Connell was stated to have advised the people to run to the banks for gold, each of these rumours had the effect of inducing a number of depositors to withdraw their deposits. Some uneasiness was also created in the minds of persons who had heard of Mr. Hume's intention during the last Session of Parliament to propose a reduction in the present rate of interest.

I have paid some attention to the educational condition of the people of Belfast, and have held for some years the situation of secretary to the Frederick-street school. I have taken an active part in establishing and extending the National system of education for Ireland. The discussions which have taken place on this subject, though they have tended in a material degree to increase the prejudices of the people, and to retard for a time the progress of the system, yet have had the effect of stimulating the desire for increasing the means of education. Schools for the education of the poor are multiplying rapidly, and although they are not all conducted on principles equally sound and liberal, and on systems equally efficacious, are nevertheless accelerating the progress

progress of information among the people. Congregational schools are also on the increase. There is nothing in the regulations of these schools positively excluding children of various religious persuasions from attending; but there is reason to apprehend that the effect of these schools being connected with particular religious bodies, and the systems of instruction which they adopt, will render education either completely sectarian, or more so than is desirable in the existing circumstances of Ireland.

John Agnew, Esq. examined.—I am sovereign, or chief magistrate of Belfast; I have filled the office for several years; I have known the general conduct of the weavers as a body; it has always been remarkably good and amenable to the law. Whenever they have been in a depressed condition or great distress, they have always acted according to the wishes of the magistrates. In 1826 a meeting of them was convened at Maze-ground, near Long-bridge. I heard of it accidentally, and to prevent any disturbance, I had a strong police force in attendance unknown to them. They had officers appointed, and a platform erected. I went forward, and remonstrated with them, and told them their proceedings were illegal, and recommended their dispersing immediately, or I should be obliged to force them to do so, and advising them, if really in distress, to apply to me, and I would bring their case before the town, and try by every means in my power to procure such relief for them as their necessities required. They immediately consented to do so, and removed their machinery, and dispersed peaceably; they brought me a statement the next day of their distressed state, I called a town meeting on the subject, and stated their cases; a subscription was entered into and collectors appointed, and about 2,400*l.* was collected. The magistrates and subscribers when in possession of funds, took into consideration the best means of affording employment to those not occupied. We purchased stones, and employed them in breaking them for three or four months, taking into consideration the numbers of their families, until trade revived, after which we handed over a large balance to the institutions of the town. Since then they have always shown a disposition to proceed in the same way.

The original subscription was refused as a gift, and only accepted as a return for work performed. Committees were appointed from amongst the subscribers and the men, and gave satisfaction. Their conduct has always been remarkably good. I think they have experienced more distress than any other class.

Sir *Robert Bateson*, Bart. M.P., bore testimony to the good conduct of the weavers, whom he described as a sober, moral, well-conducted people; and, as a magistrate, he had never known a robbery in the neighbourhood in which he resided, among their body. They had borne unexampled distress, and fallen from a most respectable to a very distressed and humble class. He believed no men had ever conducted themselves better in their very depressed condition.

The length of the preceding extracts must necessarily abridge the observations I feel called upon to make upon them. They are, however, the less necessary, as the condition of the Belfast cotton-weaver is therein fully set forth.

The two most obvious conclusions to be drawn from a perusal of the evidence are, first, that a trade is carried on in Belfast with embezzled and stolen materials, to an extent adequate to the most wide-spreading corruption of morals, by encouraging and readily rewarding dishonesty, and almost ruinous to the fair trader; and, secondly, that the existing laws are not adequate to the detection and suppression, or punishment of the offences.

The existence of such dishonest manufacture is not even questioned by a solitary witness; and among the evidences of the pernicious influence and demoralization of such traffic, is the striking acknowledgment that respectable manufacturers do not hesitate to deal with the persons engaged in it, who have actually got possession of the entire of one branch of the cotton manufacture.

Cotton Manufacture of Belfast.

Report of R. M. Muggeridge, Esq.

Mr. *Harling*, a manufacturer, says, "I believe I am correct in stating that two-thirds of the entire goods sold in the Belfast warehouses, for the immediate home trade, are the produce of weft surreptitiously obtained. This has the most injurious effects on prices, and on the wages of the weavers."

All the other witnesses confirm these startling facts, differing only as to the extent to which it is carried on.

Another important fact is, that magistrates, manufacturers, and weavers, have alike agreed upon the inadequacy of the present laws, not only to check this injurious trade, but to settle the frequent subjects of disputes arising between the two latter classes, in their ordinary and relative transactions with each other. They have combined to frame a law which shall place each in a more fair position than they now occupy, and as I have given it at length, in Mr. Malony's evidence, the Board will be enabled to form an opinion how far it is likely to be productive, if adopted, of the end desired. The only observation I shall make upon it is, that as the distresses of the hand-loom weavers led to the issuing of the present Commission, and as there must be admitted to be abundant evidence of their being a distressed class, it seems to me that the Bill is greatly defective, in making almost all the penalties money-fines. To prescribe that a weaver shall pay a fine of 5 *l.* or 10 *l.*, or 20 *l.*, for any given offence, and particularly for those of every day occurrence, appears to me to be as useless as to enact that the penalty should be the payment of the national debt. If it be contended that when the weaver "cannot pay in purse, he must pay in person," I should regard it is attempting to do in the spirit something that we have not the courage or manliness to avow in the letter; it would, in effect, lead to unequal punishment for the same offence, and lose all the preventive influences the most likely to deter from the commission of it.

I have the honour to remain,
Gentlemen,
Your obedient servant,
Richard M. Muggeridge,
Assistant Commissioner.